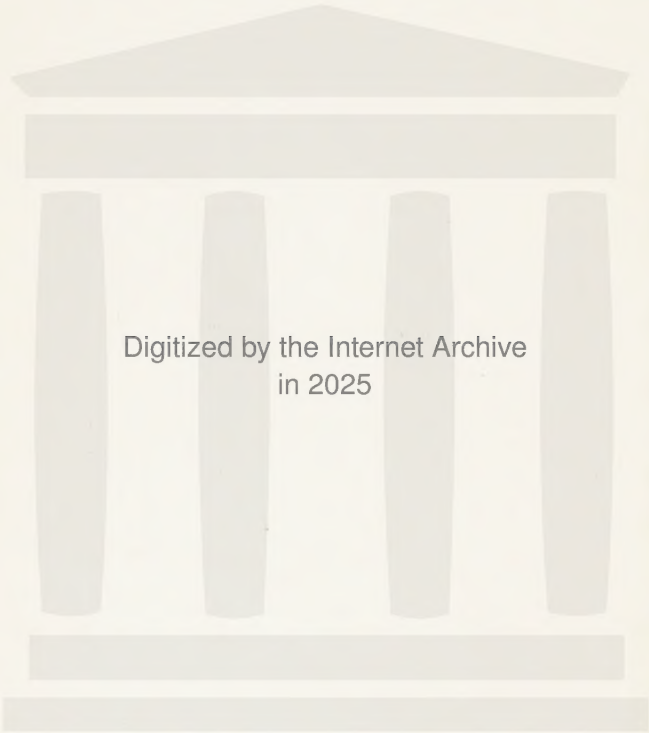
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THE JOHANNINE WRITINGS

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A Study of the Apocalypse and the Fourth Gospel

by

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TO THE MEMORY OF
MY TEACHERS
JOHN JAMES TAYLER
JAMES MARTINEAU

PREFACE

This book originated in two courses of Lectures, on the Apocalypse (1920) and the Fourth Gospel (1923), delivered at Summer Schools of Theology in Oxford. Though much has recently been written on both books, there seemed yet room for a work which should endeavour to interpret the two Scriptures, still sometimes assigned to the same author, side by side. It accordingly attempts to place before English readers without technical equipment a general view of their origin and significance in relation to religious movements of their time both within and without the early Church. In the lamentable absence of any recent English exposition of the Gospel on a more extensive scale than the suggestive treatment by Dr. A. E. Brooke in the valuable Commentary on the Bible edited by Prof. Peake, the works of French and German scholars have been freely used. The study of the New Testament in connexion with its environment, both Jewish and Gentile, has made marked progress in this country in recent years ; but much of the learning amassed by Continental investigators has yet to find its way into our handbooks.[1]

The conception of the Gospel here presented has been elaborated from an earlier lecture by the author (in *The Bible in the Nineteenth Century*, 1903), from which a few passages have been reproduced. The lecture divisions in the two subjects have been retained for convenience, and necessary introductory matter has been thrown into separate chapters at the outset of each part. Some repetitions have been inevitable, especially in the explana-

[1] Two English books unfortunately came in my way too late for discussion, and I was obliged to leave them on one side, *The Fourth Evangelist, Dramatist or Historian*, by Dr. Strachan, and *According to John*, by Lord Charnwood. The long delayed commentary on the Revelation by Prof. Lohmeyer in Lietzmann's *Handbuch zum Neuen Testament*, only reached me when my MS. had gone to press. To the Editor of the *Hibbert Journal* I am indebted for permission to use the materials of a recent article on 'Astrology in the Apocalypse.'

tion of the Gospel, where leading ideas are often so closely associated that one cannot be separately discussed without the other, and Church usage and belief are imperfectly accommodated to the lofty spiritual conceptions of the Evangelist. At the suggestion of a friend, and to justify the inclusive title of the book, a brief account of the three Letters attributed to John is added in the Epilogue. It is there argued, first, that these documents proceed from the same person who twice designates himself as the Elder, and, secondly, that the Gospel may with great probability be attributed to him also. The Evangelist thus coalesces with the Elder, presumably a Church officer well known in his own neighbourhood, who may have borne the common name John, but cannot be securely identified with any known person.

In this uncertainty no stress can be laid on the exceptional authority of the writer, who tells us nothing of the sources of the unfamiliar words or deeds which he reports. How far the devotional practice on which the book is based can continue when its dogmatic significance gradually fades from the modern mind, time only can show. The forms of religious experience change from age to age no less than those of religious thought; and adapt themselves to new conceptions of historical and philosophical truth. Such changes may for a time involve much sense of loss. But already the challenge of Jesus to the unworldly life is being heard with new force in our midst to-day. With wider outlook we shall yet learn of him to say 'Our Father'; we shall more earnestly endeavour to obey his summons to seek first the Kingdom of God; we shall still pray in our hours of trial as he has taught us, 'Not what we will, but what thou wilt.'

J. E. C.

Oxford, *October* 5, 1926.

CONTENTS

PART I

THE REVELATION OF JOHN

PAGE

INTRODUCTION: THE LITERATURE OF JEWISH APOCALYPSE - - - - - - - - - - 3
(i) Methods of Interpretation - - - - 4
(ii) Early Apocalyptic Hope - - - - 6
(iii) Resurrection and Judgment - - - - 15

LECTURE I

THE REVELATION OF JOHN: ITS ORIGIN AND CHARACTER 25
(i) The Common Stock of Eschatological Material 26
(ii) The Probable Date of the Book - - - 30
(iii) John the Prophet - - - - - - 35
(iv) Characteristics of Thought and Feeling - - 48

LECTURE II

THE LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES - - - 62
(i) The Vision of the Living One - - - 64
(ii) The Condition of the Churches - - - 73
(iii) Christianity and Homage to the Emperor - 80

LECTURE III

THE HEAVENLY WORSHIP - - - - - - - 89
(i) The Enthroned in Heaven - - - - 91
(ii) The Book and the Lamb - - - - 100
(iii) The Opening of the Seals - - - - 103
(iv) Trumpets and Woes - - - - 111

LECTURE IV

THE DRAGON AND THE BEAST - - - - - 117
(i) The Woman, her Child, and the Dragon - 118
(ii) The Beast and his Number - - - - 128
(iii) The Hundred and Forty-four Thousand on Mount Zion - - - - - - - 140

LECTURE V

PAGE
THE JUDGMENT ON ROME - - - - - - 143
(i) The Doom Announced - - - - - 143
(ii) The Seven Bowls of God's Wrath - - - 148
(iii) Rome and her Rulers - - - - - 152
(iv) The Fall of the Great City - - - - 159

LECTURE VI

THE MILLENNIAL REIGN AND THE NEW JERUSALEM - 163
(i) The Beast Overthrown and the Dragon Bound 163
(ii) The Reign of Christ and the Saints - - 169
(iii) The Judgment and the New Jerusalem - - 176
(iv) Symbols of Faith and Hope - - - - 184

Note.
The Book of Revelation, by Principal Oman - - 186

PART II

THE FOURTH GOSPEL

INTRODUCTION: THE ORIGINS OF THE GOSPEL - - 191
(i) The Ephesian Tradition - - - - 192
(ii) Ephesus and its Religions - - - - 195
(iii) The Date of the Gospel - - - - - 202
(iv) Apostle or Elder? - - - - - - 208

LECTURE I

ORIGIN AND CHARACTERISTICS - - - - - 218
(i) Theories of Additions and Redaction - - 219
(ii) Acquaintance with Synoptical Gospels - - 227
(iii) Was the Evangelist the Beloved Disciple? - 236
(iv) Use of Symbol and Allegory - - - - 242
(v) The Appendix, Chap. xxi. - - - - 245
(vi) History and Religious Imagination - - 250

LECTURE II

PAGE
THE GOSPEL AND ITS ENVIRONMENT - - - - 254
(i) The Conflict with Legal Judaism - - - 255
(ii) Contrast with Ebionitism - - - - 262
(iii) Relation to Pauline Teaching - - - 266
(iv) Extra-legal Judaism - - - - - 270
(v) Contact with Gentile Cults - - - - 277
(vi) Rise of Gnostic Speculation - - - - 284

Note.

Johannine Christianity and the Mandaeans - - 287

LECTURE III

THE PROLOGUE - - - - - - - - - 290
(i) The Creative Word and Wisdom - - - 291
(ii) The Greek Logos and Philo - - - - 296
(iii) The Hermetic Theosophy - - - - 303
(iv) The Logos became Flesh - - - - 313

LECTURE IV

THE PERSON - - - - - - - - - 323
(i) Divergent Interpretations - - - - 323
(ii) Is the Prologue the Foundation of the Gospel Teaching? - - - - - - - 332
(iii) The Messianic Title, Son of God - - - 339
(iv) The Messianic Title, Son of Man - - - 346

Note.

Titles and Descriptive Epithets - - - - 357

LECTURE V

THE MINISTRY - - - - - - - - - 358
(i) Flesh and Spirit in the Son - - - - 360
(ii) The Age of Jesus and the Day of his Death - 367
(iii) Symbolic Miracles - - - - - - 376
(iv) The Public Teaching - - - - - 385
(v) The Last Supper - - - - - - 391

LECTURE VI

PAGE

THE WAY OF SALVATION - - - - - - 397
(i) The Communication of Life - 398
(ii) Baptism and Birth from Above - - - 408
(iii) Eucharistic Doctrine - - - - - 419
(iv) Types of Eschatologic Expectation - - 436
(v) Belief, Knowledge, and Eternal Life - - 445

EPILOGUE

THE JOHANNINE LETTERS - - - - - - 456
(i) The Elder, the Letters, and the Gospel - - 457
(ii) The Fellowship and its Tradition - - - 461
(iii) The Forgiveness of Sins - - - - 464
(iv) The Life of the Children of God - - - 470

INDEX TO SCRIPTURE PASSAGES - - - - - 473

INDEX TO SUBJECTS AND NAMES - - - - 484

ABBREVIATIONS

Hastings' *E.R.E.*, Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, edited by Dr. Hastings.

Schriften des N.Ts., Schriften des Neuen Testaments, vol. iv.[4] (1920), edited by Prof. Heitmüller.

Z.N.T.W., Zeitschrift für Neu-Testamentlichen Wissenschaft.

Cp. = Compare.

Ct. = Contrast.

PART I

THE REVELATION OF JOHN

INTRODUCTION

THE LITERATURE OF APOCALYPSE

THE Book of Revelation is the greatest work of early Christian prophecy. More clearly than any other of the documents of the New Testament does it reveal the impassioned character of the faith and hope of the first believers. The variety and vividness of its pictures have suggested manifold themes for literature and art. Its mysterious visions supplied Dante, himself a traveller along the path of many prior souls, with the symbols of moral and spiritual realities as he ascends from Hell to Paradise. The splendid embodiments of mediaeval piety, such as the majestic figure of the 'Christus Regnans' looking down the long vista of the Cathedral at Pisa; the exquisite radiance of the 'Adoration of the Lamb' by Van Eyck at Ghent (about 1420); the tremendous force of the 'Last Judgment' of Michael Angelo in the Sistine Chapel at Rome; the sublime gathering of the saints and martyrs, the prophets and the heroes, in the 'Paradiso' of Tintoret in the Doge's Palace at Venice,—down to the pathetic form of the 'Light of the World' by Holman Hunt,—these and innumerable other scenes wrought into stone in our cathedrals and churches, or into allegory like *Pilgrim's Progress*, or into popular hymns like 'Jerusalem the Golden,' testify to the abiding power of the appeal made by the Apocalypse to the imagination of the Church. Here in the august solemnities of the worship of heaven and the awful dooms on earth, in the warnings of danger, the threats of tribulation, and the promises of deliverance, in the overthrow of evil and the victory of good, are

gathered with an unrivalled intensity of expression the ideas and emotions which still sway the hearts of men as they contemplate the mighty drama of our human life.

I

The Reformers, indeed, in the reaction against Rome, did not know what to make of the strange visions. Luther, in the preface to his translation of the New Testament in 1522, left it to each man to discover its meaning for himself; he would have none bound to his darkness or judgment. Twenty-three years later, in 1545, his language was more favourable. The book was useful for consolation and warning. But his interpretations were grotesque. The six angels with trumpets, for example (chaps. viii.-ix.), were identified with Tatian, Marcion, Origen (who corrupted the Scripture by philosophy and reason), Novatus, Arius, and Mohammed! Zwingli declared that it was not a Bible book, and Calvin omitted it from his commentary.

Of such fantasies of interpretation it is needless to recite specimens. The various schools, amid manifold diversities of detail, have usually been divided into three great groups, according to the period of time to which the events of the vision were referred. There was, first, the attempt to find the clue in the incidents of the seer's own day, and the victory of Christianity over the Roman Empire; the first half of the book being sometimes regarded as directed against Judaism, and the second against Rome. Thus already in 303 A.D. Victorinus of Pettau [1] had discovered Nero in the Beast's wounded head (xiii. 3). This method was favoured by the Jesuits, and supported among the Protestants by scholars like Grotius in the seventeenth century, Hammond and Wetstein in the eighteenth, down to Ewald and Bleek in the nineteenth. Another school beheld in the book a panorama of the history of the Church, its struggles and difficulties, its dangers and corruptions. Here was a series of predictions which later generations would see

[1] On the Drave in Styria.

fulfilled as the centuries ran on. The method admitted of the most elastic applications. From one point of view the great enemy (under the name of Antichrist, 1 John iv. 3) was the Pope, from another Luther, from a third Mohammed. The colossal catastrophes were realised in the French Revolution or the late war. Apollyon appeared in Napoleon ; Hengstenberg identified Gog and Magog with Demagogy. With a projection into yet more distant time the Futurists, represented in this country by Bishop Wordsworth, Archbishop Benson, and in a modified form by the late Dr. Milligan, conceived the whole book to refer to the end of the world. The predictions of the final triumph of Christ, and the destruction of his enemies, are all real events which have yet to come.

The last generation has witnessed an immense change in the appreciation of these prophecies. As far back as 1722 Johann Albert Fabricius,[1] whose enormous industry and comprehensive scholarship had enabled him to publish two great *Bibliothecæ* of Greek and Roman literature, issued a collection of materials under the title of *Apocryphus Codex Pseudepigraphus* of the Old Testament. It contained a mass of references to lost literature under ancient Biblical names, texts of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs and the Psalms of Solomon, and a lengthy series of allusions to the Book of Enoch. The significance of this literature was not, however, understood, and nearly a century passed before fresh aid came into view. In 1821 Canon Laurence, then Professor of Hebrew in the University of Oxford, and afterwards (1822-1838) Archbishop of Cashel, published a translation of the Book of Enoch from an Ethiopic manuscript in the Bodleian Library, brought from Abyssinia by the famous traveller Bruce. An edition of the text itself was further supplied by him in 1838. Under the limitations of contemporary theological study in this country English scholars failed to perceive its importance. But already in 1832 the German Friedrich Lücke, then professor at

[1] Born in 1668 ; from 1699 till his death in 1736 he filled the Chair of Rhetoric and Ethics in the Johanneum at Hamburg.

Göttingen, included a dissertation on the Jewish apocalyptic literature from 'Enoch' to '4 Ezra'[1] and 'the Shepherd' of Hermas in connexion with the Apocalypse in his Commentary on the Johannine Writings. In half a century the labours of a succession of students had made the position clear. As early as 1863 Dr. Martineau had expounded it in an elaborate essay on 'The Early History of Messianic Ideas.'[2] It was brought within the range of a wider circle of readers by Harnack's article in the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (1886), where the Apocalypse of John was frankly placed in the same class of works from a Christian standpoint. Since then the unwearied energy and learning of Dr. Charles have put a whole series of translations in our hands, which have brought the chief products of this literature into the field of common knowledge, while his recent commentary on the Book of Revelation itself embodies the results of the most minute and searching investigation into its language, its origins, and its meaning.[3]

II

The hopes of the Apocalyptic seers rested on three main principles. The Creator of the world was a righteous God, and his sovereignty was a moral order. In the deeds of men evil and good were in constant conflict. Justice therefore required that the evil should be punished. Out of these root-conceptions came a doctrine of judgment which gradually expanded till it embraced not only the dwellers upon earth, but also the ranks of superhuman powers in the heavens on high. The scale of the Divine Rule was continually enlarged. Above the firmament, in the abyss beneath, new scenes were pictured where the issues of virtue and guilt received their fitting recompense of blessedness or retribution. And Time as well as Space was adjusted to the fulfilment of God's purpose. The

[1] The Second Book of Esdras in our Apocrypha.

[2] *National Review*, reprinted in *Essays, Reviews and Addresses*, vol. iii. (1891), p. 219.

[3] See the Note, p. 23.

age-long struggle would at last be ended, and a new era of realised communion between God and his people would be established.

Only slowly could these far-reaching ideas gain coherent expression. They needed the co-operation of many minds ; they were influenced by many changes in Israel's national life ; they were stimulated by contact with cognate hopes elsewhere ; they absorbed elements of mythological imagination from cultures which historic vicissitude brought within their compass. The books which embody them rest on the older prophetic literature, however different may be their method, scope, or style. Far back in the middle of the eighth century B.C. the voice of Amos of Tekoa was heard denouncing dooms on the surrounding powers, Ammon and Moab across the Jordan, Gaza and Edom in the south, Tyre and Damascus in the north, for unbrotherly conduct not towards Israel only. Had not Moab burned the bones of the king of Edom into lime ? Israel itself should not escape punishment when they sold the righteous for silver, and dared to drink the wine of those they had unjustly fined in a temple-orgy (Amos i. 3-ii. 8). Popular expectation had already begun to look with confidence to a ' Day of the LORD ' which should lift them in triumph over their enemies. They are warned that it will be darkness and not light (Amos v. 18-20). As more distant peoples affect the policy of leaders at Jerusalem, and Egypt and Assyria become centres of secret schemes, Isaiah foretells ' a Day of Yahweh of hosts upon all that is proud and haughty, and it shall be brought low ' (Is. ii. 12). Jeremiah is bidden to make the nations in the great circuit from Jerusalem to Egypt at one extremity and Elam at the other drink the wine-cup of God's fury ; ' Yahweh hath a controversy with the nations, he will plead with all flesh ' (Jer. xxv. 15-31). Well may such a trial be realised in a *dies iræ* ; ' the men that are settled on their lees and say in their heart, Yahweh will not do good, neither will he do evil,' will feel its hurt when their houses become a desolation and clouds and thick darkness envelop them (Zeph. i. 7-18). In such a manifestation of

Yahweh's fierce anger the sun may well be eclipsed, moon and stars cease to shine, the heavens tremble, and the stable earth be shaken from its place (Isa. xiii. 9, 10). This sympathy of nature with the divine wrath had, however, another aspect. The poet could see in Yahweh's advent the sublime form of Justice. The threat of terror became an assurance of hope and joy (Ps. xcvi. 10-13) :

> 'Say among the nations, The LORD reigneth ;
> The world also is stablished that it cannot be moved :
> He shall judge the peoples with equity.
> Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice ;
> Let the sea roar and the fulness thereof ;
> Let the field exult and all that is therein ;
> Then shall all the trees of the wood sing for joy ;
> Before the LORD, for he cometh,
> For he cometh to judge the earth ;
> He shall judge the world with righteousness,
> And the peoples with his truth.'

Such were the earlier phases of Israel's prophetic outlook. It took in 'all flesh' ; it included all the peoples of the known world. But it dealt with them as national units, not as individuals. How the wicked should be separated from the good for chastisement when 'the Wrath' came was not explained. In the development of personal religion which followed the overthrow of Jerusalem and the little Kingdom of Judah, under the teaching of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, new motives from within and new influences from without began to work. The demand for individual obedience to the divine requirements led to the formulation of stricter disciplines of law, embodied ultimately in the great Priests' Code introduced by Ezra (444 B.C). Here was a rule of worship and conduct which was accepted as the direct expression of the will of God. Loyal adherence to it in the midst of poverty or tribulation became the first duty. If it was assailed it must be strenuously defended. Israel was no longer rebellious, it had become a righteous nation. Politically, of course, it had lost its independence. Ever since a prophet of the captivity had hailed Cyrus as the LORD's Messiah (Isaiah, xlv. 1), it had become clear that Babylon would fall before

his attack, and the Jews would be made subjects of the Persian Empire. The exiles were thus brought into the sphere of its influence, whether near or remote. The conquerors professed a religion well-nigh as old as their own, founded by the prophetic activity of Zarathustra. In its ancient verses the righteous rule of Ahura Mazda, the Lord All-knowing, was set forth, with a group of Bountiful Immortals around his throne. At length the age-long conflict with the powers of evil, the Lie and his attendant forces, would be ended. The era of Renovation would arrive. The dead would be raised, and would share with the living in a general judgment from which all would finally emerge purified. A last onset on the abodes of falsehood, hate, and guile, would destroy their occupants, and hell should be 'brought back for the enlargement of the world.' Here was the consummation of Ahura's sovereignty in universal order, holiness, and piety.

Such glowing hope might well give fresh impulses to Hebrew seers. New answers were tentatively suggested to the ancient question, not asked by Job for the first time, 'If a man die, shall he live again?' 'God will redeem my soul from the power of Sheol, for he shall receive me'; 'Thou wilt show me the path of life'; 'I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness'; 'Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.'[1] In such phrases did the poets utter the deep conviction that communion with God, once realised, could never be broken. Imagination had not begun to construct the scene, or fix the time, or conceive the method. All was as yet indeterminate, but the future held great possibilities, even to the presence of God in Sheol itself (Ps. cxxxix. 8). But when such aspirations were linked with the great expectation of the world-judgment, it became needful to provide for the faithful dead. In the remarkable group of prophecies and songs in Isaiah xxiv.-xxvii., whether of the later Persian or the early Greek age, the advent of Yahweh is described with every accompaniment of terror for the wicked and blessedness for the righteous. The host of the height will be

[1] Pss. xlix. 15; xvi. 11; xvii. 15; lxxiii. 24.

punished together with the kings of the earth and imprisoned, and before the splendour of God's reign in Mount Zion the moon shall be confounded and the sun ashamed (xxiv. 21-23). Here are the beginnings of later apocalyptic utterance, not yet attached to any specific name. As the prophet surveys the overthrow of the oppressors, his thoughts turn to those who have suffered at their hands, and with impassioned conviction he cries confidently to Yahweh, 'Thy dead shall live; my dead bodies shall arise' (xxvi. 19).

The judgment is here presented on an extended scale. Not only is it passed on the whole world of human beings, it reaches the powers on high who are involved in like guilt. All is vague and grandiose, and has yet to be concentrated into a single scene. The LORD's controversy with the nations issues in their destruction. They are not yet brought into a great assize confronted with open books, or condemned by a Presence on a throne. Such details await elaboration. But the universality of Yahweh's sovereignty is asserted in the strongest terms. It is this which distinguishes the conceptions of Hebrew Apocalypse from corresponding efforts to express the operation of a moral order in Hindu or Greek thought. Far far back in the ancient Vedic hymns the destinies of the dead had been divided between the realm of light in the heaven above for the faithful worshipper, and for the wicked the deep pit and its darkness. The teachers of a later day formulated their outlook in the profound principle that 'a man is born into the world that he has made.' It was, indeed, at first limited to participation in the cultus of the several deities and their respective worlds on high. But it was soon applied to all forms of action, speech, and thought, so that under the Law of the Deed (*karma*) each man found in the next life the welfare or the suffering due to his own past. On this assured expectation Gotama the Buddha (500 B.C.) planted his scheme of ethical culture for escaping from the Ill of continuous rebirths; and Buddhist popular folk-lore told how the messengers of Yama, lord of hell, carried off their appointed victims to receive their award at his tribunal

in the realm below. Here was a trial, and a sentence, which worked with unfailing equity. The world was subject to moral laws which could not be evaded. An endless succession of individual judgments transferred its inmates from earth to heaven and hell and back again without discrimination of caste or nationality or race. But at no single era, not even when the universe might perish for a while by fire or flood, would the whole process be gathered into one single 'divine event.' The new world would be like the old; the hidden potencies of good and evil would begin to act once more; if there was no eternity for the torments of the guilty, there was no permanence for the happiness of the good. Blessed were the few who could rise above the worlds of change into the region of the Unborn, the Unoriginated, the Uncompounded, though of its nature nothing could be told. It took many centuries for Buddhism to frame the promise of universal salvation, 'Ye shall all become Buddhas.' To this confidence Greek thought never attained. But it did not lack pleaders for the vindication of a Rule of Right over the disorders of human life. Already in the sixth century, while the messengers of good news were heard on the mountains of Israel proclaiming to Zion the installation of the Reign of God, and Gotama the Buddha was sending forth his missionaries north and south of the Ganges, the religious revival known as Orphism was making its way among the hills and vales of Hellas. It brought with it fair hopes for the righteous and severe dooms for the impure. Under its influence Pindar sang of the felicity of the just, and Plato pictured the regions below encompassed with a river of flaming fire, and the dread tribunal where three judges awarded to naked souls, exhibiting all their deformities of sin, the penalties of their crimes. Did the 'barbarian' appear there as well as the Hellene? The earlier Greek thought had a vivid consciousness of race, spread from its colonies on the Black Sea to the coasts of Spain, but it did not take the form of a divine election among the nations of the earth, or generate the belief that they were the bearers of a revelation, the agents of a purpose, through which the

will of God should be realised among men. They were humanists, but the problem of the destiny of non-Greeks did not present itself. For the Jew, on the other hand, this faith was deeply implanted in Israel's heart after it had accepted the obligations of the Law under Ezra, and it was this which in seasons of peril and disappointment produced the series of apocalyptic works which have been designated by a modern student 'Tracts for Bad Times.' [1]

The conquests of Alexander the Great (from 334 to 323) brought the Jews into the sphere of Greek influence, though it may have begun to affect them distantly still earlier. Under its stimulating power, while the Scribes were at work upon the Law, the older modes of traditional Wisdom were gathered up into the splendid impersonation in Prov. viii., which presented her as the organ of divine rule in the social order, and the intellectual instrument of God's creative activity. The conception passed on through the moralisings of the Son of Sirach, and was closely linked with Stoic thought in the Wisdom of Solomon where it approximates to the Logos. Here were two important lines in the development of Israel's religious life with which apocalyptic speculation had little direct concern. New interest, however, was awakened by the expansion of knowledge, and early in the second century B.C. some of the themes of earlier prophecy were presented in fresh forms under the sanction of Enoch.[2] The closing discourses in the book of Job, the praises of the Creator in such Psalms as xix. and civ., had already celebrated the wonder and splendour of the works of the Almighty. It is a favourite topic in Ecclesiasticus, where the glory of the firmament, sun, moon, and steadfast stars, the beauty of the rainbow, and all the changes of frost and snow, lightning and thunder, are portrayed with a glowing enthusiasm (xlii. 15-xliii.). To this the Scribe adds the wisdom which comes with the opportunity of leisure, and the experience gained by meditation in the Law of the Most High and travel through the land of strange nations.

[1] Cp. Anderson Scott, Revelation (Century Bible), p. 27.

[2] Enoch 1-37, comprising different materials, among them being fragments of an earlier Book of Noah (Charles).

Study and prayer, if the great Lord will, shall fill him with the spirit of understanding (xxxviii. 24 ; xxxix. 1-6). The method of the Apocalyptist was different, and his outlook was more comprehensive. His eyes were opened by God, and he saw visions of the Holy One in the heavens (Enoch i. 2). So Enoch voyages through the universe. He is bidden to observe the abiding order of the heavens and the seasonal successions on the earth, the works of God, in contrast with the violence and confusion among men. He is conducted to the place of darkness and sees the river of gleaming fire (the Pyriphlegethon of the Greeks). From the summit of a mountain reaching to heaven he discerns the places of the luminaries and the treasuries of the stars. He looks on the place whence flow all the waters of the deep, on the corner-stone of the earth, and notes how the winds bear up the vault of the sky. He gazes on an abyss, beyond which is the end of heaven and earth, waste and horrible. It is the prison for the rebellious stars and the host of heaven (xviii. 14) and the wicked angels who promoted false worship to demons, till the day of judgment, when they would be consigned to a place more horrible still, blazing with fire, from which he turned away in fear and affright (xxi. 7-10). Then his angel guide led him to mountain hollows, deep and dark indeed but smooth, with one bright place and a fountain of water in its midst. There were assembled the souls of the dead, waiting in their turn for the appointed end (xxii. 4). The scene of the great judgment is laid on Mount Sinai. The fire of the divine manifestation melts the mountains as the eternal God comes with ten thousands of his holy ones. With the righteous he will make peace, they shall all belong to God, the spirits of the righteous dead being raised to enjoy their blessedness (i. 4-9). The righteous are doubtless faithful Israelites. The sinners of the nation are not raised for the condemnation and destruction awaiting the wicked at the last day (xxii. 13) ; they remain in the gloom of Sheol. But ' all flesh ' will be convicted of their ungodliness, and shall perish for ever (i. 9). Yet so mixed are the elements of apocalyptic speculation that when the earth is cleansed from all

oppression and uncleanness, and the throne of God is established in Jerusalem and the Eternal King descends to visit the earth in goodness (xxv. 3), and the elect are fed from the tree of life, all the children of men shall become righteous, and all nations shall offer adoration and praise him (x. 20, 21). Where do these nations come from? The Gentiles who have been swept away reappear converted. Such are the incoherences which arise from the imperfect combination of materials conceived from different points of view.[1]

None of the books of Enoch secured admission into the Canon. But in the third division of the Hebrew Scriptures, according to the usage of the Synagogue, the Book of Daniel gained a definite place.[2] As is well known, it arose in the midst of the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes, when the Greek overlord of the Syrian Kingdom endeavoured to destroy the religion of his Jewish subjects (166 B.C.). In the name of an ancient prophet, located in Babylon during the Captivity, it sought to encourage the worshippers of the God of heaven in the faithful observance of their appointed Law. It promised them deliverance in a 'time and times and a half,' understood to mean three years and a half (42 months or 1260 days), a number repeated in different connexions in our Apocalypse. But this was not all. It surveyed the history of the past under the figure of a succession of empires leading up to the establishment of the Divine Rule on earth in the dominion given to the people of the saints of the Most High. Here for the first time Israel was taught the meaning of the suffering of centuries as the vicissitudes of their experience slowly led up to the fulfilment of God's purpose. The explanation is not given by 'the word of the LORD.' It is mysteriously conveyed by the visions of a dream (vii.). The seer looks out over the 'great sea'; it is the symbol of the troubled ocean of human life, lashed into fury by the four winds of heaven. Out of it in slow succession issue four great beasts. In animal forms they

[1] A similar difficulty will be found in Rev. xxii. Cp. Lect. VI. p. 174.

[2] It stands between Esther and Ezra, Nehemiah, and Chronicles. The English order, like the Greek, puts it next to Ezekiel.

represent four empires which had one after the other been the oppressors of Israel, the Babylonian, Median, Persian, Greek. The last was a monster, terrible and strong exceedingly, with great iron teeth and ten horns. Then thrones were placed, and one like an Aged Man took his seat above the fiery stream that came forth before him, with the assessors of the heavenly court around him, and myriads of angelic ministers waiting his bidding. The books were opened, and the judgment began. One after another the beasts were presented for sentence. The first three lost their sovereignty but not their lives. The fourth was slain, and his body was destroyed by fire, apparently in the flaming river issuing from beneath the throne, the dread agency of penal justice. Then, on the clouds of heaven, came one in human form 'like unto a son of man.' To man God had at his creation given dominion over the earth and all its varied forms of life. The man from heaven similarly receives the gift of sovereignty over the brutish powers of the world. He is the impersonation of the people of the saints of the Most High, the ideal Israel whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom (vii. 27), so that the Rule of God will be realised in the obedience of the nations.

III

By the middle of the second century B.C. the main lines of apocalyptic hope were thus laid down. In their development many fresh elements were introduced as new questions were asked and new answers given. The cosmic speculations of Enoch were largely expanded under the influence of conceptions of Babylonian origin widely spread in Western Asia. Above the visible firmament rose seven heavens, a construction founded on the Babylonian scheme of sun, moon, and five planets. When once the number had acquired a sacred character (as in the Hebrew week) it reappears in many connexions. In the 'Secrets of Enoch' (about 50 A.D.) the patriarch is conducted by his angel guide on the long ascent till in the seventh he beholds from afar the Lord sitting on his lofty

throne. There were the multitudes of the heavenly hosts, among them being the lordships and principalities, the powers and thrones, which the Apostle Paul recognised in the worlds above.[1] He had himself been caught up in rapture to the third heaven, where Paradise was located.[2] In the fourth Jewish imagination placed the 'Jerusalem which is above,' with its temple and altar, where Michael served as celestial high-priest. Many were the ranks of the dwellers in these exalted regions. At the summit were the seven great Angels of the Presence, already named in the second century B.C. (Enoch xx.; cp. Rev. xv. 6), the probable equivalents in Jewish angelology of the seven Bountiful Immortals of Persian scripture; or the four Angels of the Face of the Lord (Enoch xl. 2), the counterparts of the tutelary rulers of the four quarters of the earth in Babylonian cosmology. There were others charged with all the operations and forces of nature, the heavenly bodies, sun, moon, and stars, day and night, the seasons and the weather, rain, hail, frost, storms of wind, thunder, lightning, and earthquake, the groups and species of animals, trees, and plants. And human beings, from childhood to maturity, were not forgotten (Matt. xviii. 10; Acts xii. 16). Yet these upper realms were, after all, not wholly pure. In the great 'Day,' indeed, they would 'raise one voice' with a sevenfold ascription of praise, 'and bless and glorify and exalt in the spirit of faith, and the spirit of patience, and the spirit of mercy, and the spirit of judgment, and the spirit of peace, and the spirit of goodness' (Enoch lxi. 11). But as Enoch passed into the second heaven he saw prisoners suspended in darkness, awaiting their doom at the judgment (Secrets vii. 1; Jude 6; 2 Pet. ii. 4). In the Christian vision of Isaiah,[3] when the Lord goes forth to be born of the Virgin Mary, he assumes the form of the angels in each successive heaven from the sixth in his descent, that he may pass through unrecognised. He reaches the firmament, after duly giving the password, but under the 'ruler of this

[1] Romans viii. 38; Col. i. 16; Ephes. i. 21. Cp. 1 Pet. iii. 22.

[2] 2 Cor. xii. 2-4.

[3] Charles, Ascension of Isaiah, x. 17; about 100 A.D. p. xlv.

world' the occupants were envying one another and fighting, and beneath, among the angels of the air, one was plundering and doing violence to the other. Here were the enemies which the Christ must overcome, the Prince of the Power of the Air (Ephes. ii. 2), the Principalities and Authorities and Powers which the Messiah must put under his feet (1 Cor. xv. 24). At their head was the arch-enemy, the Adversary (1 Tim. v. 14; 1 Pet. v. 8), the Satan with his troop of Satans (Enoch xl. 7), who was not only the chief Accuser (Rev. xii. 10), but also the possessor of all the kingdoms of the world (Matt. iv. 8), and boldly opposed his Rule to the Rule of God (Matt. xii. 26, 28). The strong man must be bound, said Jesus, if his house is to be spoiled. That the Opponent (under the name of Beliar) should be bound had been long promised,[1] and John saw an angel descend from the sky with the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand, and bind the Devil for a thousand years (Rev. xx. 1).

Such was the Apocalyptic outlook on the existing scene. The details were variously elaborated by imagination, as anger and hope suggested different aspects of the expected 'divine event.' When would it arrive? The seer of Daniel had apparently looked for it in 'a time and times and half a time' (Dan. vii. 25) in the near future. Speculation was busy when this hope failed, and it became more and more clear that the advent of the Rule would be preceded by tribulation and catastrophe. John the Baptist, indeed, proclaimed that it was at hand, and Jesus opened his ministry with the same cry of warning and encouragement (Matt. iii. 2, iv. 17). By that time expectation had begun to divide the world's course into two periods, the age that now is and the age to come (Matt. xii. 32). All through the New Testament runs the note of immediacy. In the apocalyptic discourse on the Mount of Olives ascribed to Jesus (Mk. xiii.) the social disorders and the physical portents which will herald the arrival of the Son of Man on the clouds of heaven are announced for that generation, so that some of the

[1] Testaments of the XII. Patriarchs, 'Levi,' xviii. 12.

disciples shall be alive to welcome their returning Lord. Paul consoles the believers at Thessalonica, who see their little group already thinned by death, with the promise that while the departed shall be raised first, 'we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air' (1 Thess. iv. 17). So the seer of Patmos hears the cheering word 'Behold, I come quickly,' and it is left for the latest document in the Canon to apologise for the delay (2 Pet. iii. 3-13).

The judgment would be inaugurated by the Resurrection. Dimly did post-exilian prophecy first venture to utter such a hope. In our canonical books it first becomes definitely articulate in the vision of Daniel on the banks of the Tigris when the deliverance of Israel is promised after a time of trouble (xii. 2).

'And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting abhorrence. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.'

Ezekiel had pictured the revival of the nation out of its deadness in captivity as the dry bones that lay exposed in the open valley were reclothed with flesh, and breath was breathed on them that they might live. A later prophet had uttered the half-despairing cry, 'May the dead live! may my dead bodies arise!' and had answered it with the confident assurance, 'The earth shall cast forth the shades.' But in the stress of persecution, of heroic steadfastness and faithless apostasy, this emergence could not lead to the same lots. The loyal in danger merited reward, the cowardly deserved punishment. Those who had neither died as martyrs nor forsaken their religion as apostates, would not be summoned either to bliss or doom; they would stay where they were in Sheol. But as thought ranged more and more widely over the past, those who stood prominently before the national veneration must be included, Noah and Shem, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the twelve Patriarchs and their sons, and then all righteous Israelites. Those might, indeed, be raised for a special

term of blessedness, while the sinners perished in hell and ceased to be (Pss. Sol. iii. 13). The diversities in Israel's own history naturally first awoke attention. But with the expanding outlook over the world the Gentile peoples could not be forgotten, especially those who had inflicted so much suffering on God's inheritance. Benjamin (Twelve Patriarchs, x. 7) expects that he and his brothers would rise first, each over his own tribe, and their descendants would be judged first. The Gentiles would follow; but with surprising breadth of view the patriarch declares that their best representatives would supply the standard by which Israel itself should be tried. And so in the great Day when the Son of Man sits on the throne of his glory and the nations are gathered before him, the test is not that of right belief or legitimate worship, but helpfulness to those in need (Matt. xxv.). Rabbi Jochanan ben Zakkai, a contemporary of the author of the Apocalypse, 'specifically stated that if Israel had the altar, the nations had alms-giving and charity as a means of atonement.' [1]

Over the Judgment, as Daniel saw it in his dream, the LORD himself would preside. This is still the expectation of many a later seer. Following the prophetic style of theophanies, the author of the 'Assumption of Moses' early in our era describes the advent of the Heavenly One as he rises from his royal throne and goes forth from his holy habitation (x. 3-7). So the Solomonic Psalmist had anticipated a day of mercy for the righteous when the LORD visited the earth with his judgment, but of everlasting destruction of the sinners (iii. 13-16, xv. 13-15). As Ezra ponders on the mysteries of birth and life's travail, he is told that as all things had been made by God their issues were all considered, and they should be ended by him alone when he would draw nigh to visit the dwellers upon earth (2 Esdras vi.). The Parables (or Similitudes) of Enoch, however, assign the actual function of judgment to God's Elect. He sits beside the Ancient of Days portrayed in Daniel, with the appearance of a man, chosen by the Lord of Spirits before sun and stars

[1] Montefiore, *The Old Testament and After* (1923), p. 454.

were made, to be a staff to the righteous, the light of the Gentiles, and the hope of those who are troubled of heart. He impersonates the heavenly will under the title Son of Man, he is even identified as the Messiah (xlviii. 10, lii. 4); and when the Day has drawn nigh he will arise and save the righteous and slay the sinners with the breath of his mouth. This was no Son of David, but the recognition of Jesus as the Son of Man in the character of Messiah naturally led the early Church to assign this dread function to him. Paul, indeed, can still expect to 'stand before the judgment seat of God'; but the great decision is entrusted by him to Christ (Rom. xiv. 10, ii. 16; 2 Cor. v. 10). It is noteworthy that while the Lamb in the Apocalypse is associated with the Almighty as the spiritual temple of the Holy City which comes down from heaven (xxi. 22), he has no place in the great assize before God's throne. The contemporary author of 2 Esdras foretold a reign of Christ for four hundred years (vii. 28) to be ended by his death. John looks for the reign of the martyrs and the faithful who would not worship the Beast, around their Lord, for a thousand years (xx. 4). But when earth and heaven flee away they have vanished in the mysterious immensity.

What would be the issue of the judgment? For the rebellious angels there are everlasting woes, and all spirits of deceit shall be trodden under foot. The demonic oppressors of Israel, the world-powers in the realms above, will be hurled into the fiery deep. The passionate anger with sin prompts fierce wrath against both godless Israelites and the vast multitude of unbelievers; for sinners of all sorts—and their name was legion—there are dooms to endless flames, or with a less dreadful fate to absolute annihilation. Only the knowledge of the worst degradation which familiarity with great cities revealed to a traveller like Paul (Rom. i. 18-32), can explain his terrible picture of the vengeance of the Lord Jesus as he descends from the sky with the angels of his penal power (2 Thess. i. 7, 8). When, a few years later, he foretells the subjugation of all the sinful agents among Principalities and Authorities and Powers, and even the mastery

of Death itself, by the Christ in whom all shall be made alive (1 Cor. xv. 22 ff.), does not the vision of God as 'all in all' imply a world without a hell, from which all evil has been done away? Would that be reached by the destruction of the wicked, or by their conversion? There was room for Gentiles within Jewish hope. 'All the nations,' said the dying Tobit (xiv. 6, 7) 'shall turn to fear the Lord God truly, and shall bury their idols. And all the nations shall bless the Lord, and his people shall give thanks unto God.' The ancient prayer which still concludes every public service of the synagogue, looked for the time 'when the world will be perfected under the kingdom of God, and all the children of flesh will call upon thy name, and thou wilt turn unto thyself all the wicked of the earth.' [1]

Such were some of the aspects of the Apocalyptic hope. The fundamental ideas which prompted them were not, after all, peculiar to Hebrew imagination. Good and evil are woven into human experience all the world over; and when they are realised with sufficient intensity, and meditation within the sanctuary of religion has reached the conviction of a Moral Rule under Divine Government, the conflict between them must be viewed in the light of the overthrow of sin and the establishment of righteousness. In the theology of India Vishnu was the hero of this conflict. Through a series of ages the world fell more and more under the power of wickedness. 'When virtue and morality decline,' says the Deity of the Good Mind, 'and sin and misconduct increase, I take my birth in the families of good men. And, assuming a human form, I restore peace by destroying all evils.' Such was the theory of the 'Descents.' The great epic known as the Mahābhārata, which includes poems from two or three centuries on either side of our era, describes one of these incarnations. The last of the Four Ages constituting a world-cycle will be marked by all kinds of disorder as its close approaches. The rites of religion will be neglected and family ties dissolved. Crime will multiply and famine will spread. The framework of nature will begin to give way. The sun

[1] Montefiore, *The Old Testament and After*, p. 454.

will be permanently eclipsed; the stars will cease to shine; meteors will flash and fall, and dreadful conflagrations will break out in the four directions. Then Vishnu will be born as a Brāhman named Kalki. Brāhmans and warriors will gather round him. His rule will be supported by the strength of his virtue. Later imagination portrayed him as riding through the world on a white horse with a blazing sword. When the wicked have been destroyed righteousness will be secured upon the earth; the vigour of the universe will be renewed, and the Age of Purity will begin again.[1]

Jewish and Christian Apocalyptists conceived the warfare on a larger scale. It was waged in heaven as well as on the field of human life. The seer could be rapt into the sky and look through a door in the firmament, or mount through the celestial regions into the very presence of the Lord. With equal ease he could descend to Jerusalem or stand on the seashore.[2] Time could be traversed with the same facility. No period is specified for the solemn openings of the seven Seals, or the operation of the plagues in the seven Bowls. Beyond the reign of Christ and the saints for a thousand years vision discerns the flight of earth and sky, the creation of a new world after the judgment bearing the Holy City fresh from its seat on high. All kinds of personalities fill the scenes below, above, and pass unhindered to fulfil divine commands. Where no science is, the objects and powers of nature are all plastic. Celestial voices are heard pealing through the air; even the altar itself in the fourth heaven can speak (Rev. xvi. 7); the sound of many waters is never far away. Lightnings and thunders and earthquakes and great hail emphasise the divine manifestations, and help to create an atmosphere of awe. Unlike the more limited horizon of the Synoptic Gospels, the scene of Revelation is the whole inhabited earth. Its view repeatedly embraces all mankind. In place of the simplicity of country life with its distant glimpses of kings' courts and travelling merchants, the Seer beholds the pomp and luxury of a

[1] See the author's *Theism in Mediaeval India* (1921), p. 240.

[2] Rev. xi. 1, xiii. 1, reading 'I stood,' with many of the best moderns.

great city and the fleets of imperial trade. The Gospel is proclaimed to every nation and tribe and tongue and people, and the multitude of the redeemed corresponds. The history of the world is drawing swiftly to its close. The purpose of God begun with the first man, committed to Israel, but thwarted again and again by human sin and angelic interference, is to be fulfilled at last. The Apocalyptic teaching was not content with the Law and the scheme of duty based upon it by the Scribes for the performance of the divine will. It sought for an initiative from God himself, and as at the beginning of creation he had looked upon his works and pronounced them very good, so at the end the seers beheld a scene in which a new heaven and a new earth, fresh from his hand, secured the eternity of righteousness and peace. The successions of the world's course were thus knit together. Whatever disturbing elements had entered it through angelic or human disobedience would be overcome. Through all the variations of the Apocalyptic scheme ran one majestic idea. The vicissitudes of the past were no casual incidents or unrelated events. The prophets and seers who interpreted them in the light of the moral order of the Rule of God, saw them bound into one whole. The humanist vision of Wisdom, directing the operations of nature and the functions of society, was quickened by an intense ethical passion, and carried with daring flights of imagination through a vastly expanded universe. And so the entire range of existence, from its Alpha to its Omega, symbols of the completeness of the Deity, was brought into one enduring unity.

NOTE

Aids to the Study of the Apocalypse

In 1893 Dr. Charles published his first translation of Enoch; a second edition followed in 1912. The book had long been recognised as composed of different documents. In the following list of his other translations and commentaries Daniel (in the Revised Version) is included

because of his interpretations of its visions. The original works may be dated as follows:

Enoch 1-36	170 B.C.
Daniel	166
Enoch 83-90	166-161
Jubilees	135-95
Enoch 91-104	134-95
Testaments of XII. Patriarchs	109-107
Enoch 37-70	94-64
Assumption of Moses	7-30 A.D.
Slavonic Enoch	1-50
Ascension of Isaiah	1-100
Baruch	50-90

To these should be added from other Editors the Psalms of Solomon, 70-40 B.C., and the Second Book of Esdras (in our Apocrypha, often called 4 Ezra), 81-96 A.D.

These books will all be found collected in *The Apocrypha and the Pseudepigrapha of the O.T.* vol. ii. (1913). The whole subject is treated in his *Hebrew, Jewish, and Christian Eschatology* (1899), and more briefly in *Religious Development between the Old and New Testaments* (1914).

On the Revelation see the article in the *Encycl. Brit.*[11] (1911), *Studies in the Apocalypse* (1913), and the two volumes on Revelation in the *International Critical Commentary* (1920).

All students will also consult the commentaries of Dr. Swete (1906) and Dr. Moffatt (*Expositor's Greek Test.*, 1910). Useful aid is given to non-technical readers by Mr. Anderson Scott in the *Century Bible* (no date); by Prof. Shirley Jackson Case in *The Revelation of John* (Chicago, 1919); and Dr. Glazebrook in *The Apocalypse of St. John* (1923). The student who desires learning and clearness without minute critical detail will find it in Dr. Peake's volume, *The Revelation of John* (1919).

LECTURE I

THE BOOK OF REVELATION, ITS ORIGIN AND CHARACTER

The modern study of the literature of Israel and of the early Church has revealed a multitude of facts which have profoundly modified our conceptions of the composition of works once attributed to single authors. Every reader now knows that the books of the Pentateuch long ascribed to Moses are really a compilation from documents not only of far later date than the Exodus, but also separated from each other by several centuries. The book of Isaiah contains oracles belonging to the days of Hezekiah of Jerusalem and the Assyrian Sennacherib, of the Persian conqueror Cyrus, and probably of Alexander the Great or his successors. Materials from various sources can be easily separated in the books of Enoch or Baruch. Christian writers revised and adapted Jewish productions such as the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs or 4 Ezra. The Gospel according to Mark, with a different distribution of its materials and some revision of its language, served as a basis for Matthew and Luke, in which a second document can also be traced, together with a number of incidents and teachings derived from unknown sources. Even the Fourth Gospel, which seems at first sight to bear the powerful impress of a single mind, has received additions. The witness of the earliest manuscripts shows that the story of the guilty woman brought for judgment before Jesus (John vii. 53-viii. 11) was a later interpolation. The last chapter (xxi.) in the judgment of most recent critics is an appendix after the

writer had explained his own object (xx. 30, 31) ; and it is even possible that the Prologue was prefixed when the main narrative of the book was first complete.[1] The story of the early Church in Acts contains the original notes of one of the Apostle Paul's companions on his last journey, but it is still a question whether he was also the author of the whole book and of the Gospel of which it is the sequel, and what sources he employed for his representation of the community at Jerusalem and the original spread of Christianity.

I

The reader of our Apocalypse, as he passes from the letters addressed to the seven Churches and the solemn scenes of the heavenly worship, finds himself confronted by successions of appalling dooms conceived in series of sevens. Seven Seals are opened one after another ; seven Trumpets are sounded ; seven Bowls of wrath are emptied over the earth. The incidents of one series are sometimes repeated in another, and unexpected episodes interrupt the sequence. Thus the terrors of the seven Trumpets (viii. 2 ff.) are combined in ver. 13 with three Woes. Two of these are described at great length in ix., the first being closed at ver. 12. The issue of the second (vv. 20, 21) suggests that the second is also past. But the announcement is postponed until various events without apparent connexion have intervened (x.-xi. 14), and the seer can declare that the second Woe is over, and the third will come quickly. The formula is not repeated, and the reader enquires where is the third. It is sometimes found in xii. 12, ' Woe for the earth and for the sea, because the devil is gone down unto you, having great wrath,' and the war with the saints (ver. 17) is begun by the Beast (xiii. 7). But this does not correspond with the eagle's cry (viii. 13), ' Woe, woe, woe, for them that dwell on the earth.' The torments which follow on idolaters and evil-doers of every sort, described with unusual minuteness in ix., are directed against the great mass of mankind. There is no analogy

[1] See the discussion below, p. 332 ff.

to them in the persecution of the Christians, and the events of the third Woe seem to have been omitted. On the other hand, after the sun has become black as sackcloth and the moon as blood on the opening of the sixth Seal (vi. 12), when the fourth Trumpet is sounded (viii. 12), only the third parts of sun and moon are darkened. Twice do the islands flee away and the mountains move from their places (vi. 14 and xvi. 20). The cosmic catastrophes which announce the advent of the Judgment have already arrived before the seventh Seal is opened. When the sky is rolled up like a scroll and the stars have fallen to the ground like unripe figs from a tree shaken by the wind, the dwellers on the earth, kings and princes, slave and freeman, find themselves exposed to the awful Presence of Him that sitteth upon the throne, and of the Lamb: 'the great Day of their Wrath is come, and who is able to stand?' (vi. 12-17). What further can happen? There cannot be a more dread preparation for the final scene. But it is postponed to make room for a second set of dooms expanded into another series of seven Trumpets[1] in viii.-ix. When at last after strange interruptions the seventh angel sounds, the Almighty who is and was (but is no longer 'to come,' as he is there in all the fulness of his majesty) has already taken his great power and begun to reign. His Wrath has been manifested, it is the time of the dead to be judged (xi. 15-18). It was promised that when the seventh angel sounded the mystery of God should be completed (x. 7). But it is once more deferred. Again it is announced that the hour of God's judgment has come (xiv. 7), and it is twice described in succession. One like unto a son of man, seated on a white cloud, with a sharp sickle in his hand, is instructed by another angel that the harvest of the earth is over-ripe and the hour to reap has come. He casts his sickle on the earth, and the earth is reaped. Thereupon another angel, also with a sharp sickle, is summoned in similar fashion to gather the clusters of the earth's vine, and it is duly cast into the great wine-press of God's Wrath (xiv. 14-20). But the end is not yet.

[1] See Charles, i. pp. 218, 232.

More wrath must be poured out from seven Bowls (xvi.). With the seventh a mighty voice proclaims from the throne that 'It is done.' Lightnings and voices and thunders are followed by a terrific earthquake, and amid its ruins, as islands and mountains disappear, Babylon is remembered by God, and compelled to drink the wine-cup of the fury of his Wrath (vv. 17-21). Even the fall of Babylon, however, described with the passionate eloquence of religious hate in the great ode (xviii.) modelled on ancient prophetic denunciation, leaves much still unaccomplished. The heaven itself must be opened that he who is called 'Faithful and True' may ride forth with his celestial horsemen to the war, may smite the nations, and himself tread the wine-press of the Almighty's Wrath (xix. 11-16).

It is difficult to believe that these successive scenes were originally composed in a continuous and coherent order. They rather have the character of separate sketches adapted to the general scheme which already meets us in the prophecy placed in the mouth of Jesus on the Mount of Olives (Mark xiii). How such anticipations of tribulation, of social confusion, famines and earthquakes, sun and moon eclipsed, stars falling from the sky, could be heightened by the addition of more apocalyptic detail or modified to suit a different historical situation, may be seen in the parallel versions of Matthew and Luke. There was a common stock of eschatological material which fed the imagination and kindled the hope of the first believers, and provided the seer with a framework capable of receiving fresh elements from unexpected sources. From the Euphrates to the Levant, from Egypt to Asia Minor, all kinds of mythologies jostled each other. Babylon and its astrology, Persia and its warfare between the powers of good and evil, Hebrew prophecy and Greek legend, all met on the same field. Christian apocalyptic could be borrowed from them all. But though some of the scenes and figures in the visions of Patmos may owe suggestions to foreign imagery, the background of their language is plainly that of the literature of Israel. Page after page is filled with the speech

of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and the rest. The minute examination of the language of Revelation which Dr. Charles has carried out with such untiring care, shows how often the uncouth grammar of the Seer is due to the literal translation of Semitic idiom, how many of its strange phrases rest directly on a Jewish original.

In the recognition of different eschatologic presentations conceived at different times we may find a provisional explanation of puzzling incongruities. They have, however, received the impress of a single mind. The majestic strains of the angelic worship heard from time to time above the tumults below, carry on the harmonies of the adoration which the Seer witnesses through the open door of heaven (iv. 1), and bind the whole within the compass of eternity. And phrase after phrase, and number after number, indicate a pervading similarity of conception, such as has been already illustrated in the descriptions of the coming of the Wrath. All through the book the writer plays with the number seven. The 'time and times and half a time' (xii. 14) constitute a recognised period of distress (Dan. vii. 25, xii. 7). It covers three and a half years, or forty-two months, or twelve hundred and sixty days (xi. 2, 3, xii. 6, xiii. 5). Cp. three and a half days (xi. 9, 11), the half of a period of seven. Sevenfold power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honour, and glory, and blessing, are ascribed to the Lamb (v. 12); sevenfold blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, are offered to God (vii. 12).[1] The inhabitants of the earth are reckoned in seven classes, kings, princes, chief captains, the rich, the strong, bondmen and freemen (vi. 15); or they are summed up as 'the small and great' (xi. 18, xiii. 16, xix. 5, 18, xx. 12). The gift of power or authority (*exousia*) is constantly recorded, whether it is from a heavenly or a demonic source, in the same terms (ii. 26, vi. 8, ix. 3, xiii. 2, 4, 5, 7, xvii. 13); and its possession is

[1] Cp. further illustrations, below pp. 55, 63, 66. Hellenistic mysticism was full of sevens: seven planets, seven numbers, seven vowels, seven strings of the lyre and tones of the Heptachord, seven spheres, seven heavens, seven stages of redemption, seven days of the week, seven metals, seven colours. Cp. Dieterich, *Abraxas* (1890), p. 47.

similarly assigned to the scorpions from the abyss or the magic horses twice ten thousand times ten thousand (ix. 3, 10, 19), to Elijah and Moses (xi. 6), to angels, the name of God, the second death, and the blessed who have washed their robes (xiv. 18, xvi. 9, xviii. 1, xx. 6, xxii. 14). In warning or promise the speedy advent of the Messiah is repeatedly predicted, 'I come quickly' (ii. 5, 16, iii. 3, 11, xvi. 15 oddly inserted in an uncongenial context, xxii. 7, 12, 20), from first to last the emphatic message of the whole book. Over against the semi-personal aspect of the Wrath stands the gracious figure of the glorified Christ the Living One (i. 17), who has sat down with his Father in his throne, and to the victor in life's warfare promises a similar reward (iii. 21 ; cp. xx. 4).

II

The Christian believer who reads his New Testament devoutly as part of what he still calls 'the Word of God,' is little concerned about the origins of the several books which it contains. But the great movement of historical enquiry into the Scriptures during the second half of the last century has produced a vast literature of research in the endeavour to trace the steps by which the documents of the faith came into being, and the subsequent process of their union in one collection. The student finds himself constantly hampered at the outset of his enquiry by the difficulty of determining the dates of his materials and the conditions under which they assumed their present form. Their authorship, the place and time of their composition, are often uncertain. The Gospels, for instance, bear traditional titles, but themselves contain no identifying names. The Epistle to the Hebrews is still ascribed in our Revised Version to the Apostle Paul, though no scholar of to-day but echoes the pious declaration of the great Alexandrian teacher Origen (185-253) that only God knew who wrote it.[1] Modern investigation

[1] The Revisers excused themselves for retaining the Apostle's name on the ground that they were only instructed to revise the text and the translation, but not the titles !

has proved that both Matthew and Luke incorporated the larger part of Mark, and no one doubts that Paul wrote to his Galatian disciples before he addressed the Church at Rome. But the actual chronology of his letters cannot be definitely established any more than the question what became of him when the author of Acts has left him in his hired house in Rome. Traditional identifications only begin to appear towards the second half of the second century. By that time the impassioned expectation of the immediate return of Christ which marked the first days of missionary enthusiasm had begun to decline. The Church looked round upon itself with satisfaction on its members from East to West, and began to busy itself with its own history. Then for the first time does the Apocalypse come into view. The Samaritan Justin, who passed through Greek philosophy into Christianity and lived for some time at Ephesus before he went to Rome, attributed it (about 150) to the Apostle. Melito, Bishop of Sardis (one of John's Seven Churches) between 160 and 190, wrote a commentary on it. Irenæus, born about 130, who studied in his youth under Polycarp, the revered Bishop of Smyrna (another of the Seven), carried the tradition to Gaul, where he became Bishop of Lyons after the martyrdom of Pothinus in 177. There he was brought into contact with various forms of heresy and composed an elaborate work of Refutation (180-185). In this treatise he mentions the Vision as seen 'almost in our generation towards the end of the reign of Domitian.'[1] This statement places it about 95 A.D.[2] It was frequently repeated by later writers, who (as in other cases of the transmission of tradition) simply copied earlier affirmations without any other evidence of their own. What support does it receive either from the book itself or from the record of contemporary events?

The visions again and again imply not only that Christians are in danger, but that many have already perished. When the fifth seal was opened the seer beheld

[1] *Adv. Haer.* v. 30, 3, quoted by the historian Eusebius, iii. 18, 3 before 323. Cp. below, p. 35.

[2] Domitian reigned 81-96.

under the altar (sometimes placed in the fourth heaven) 'the souls of them that had been slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held.' The first external record of such slaughter meets us in the pages of the historian Tacitus as the hideous sequel of the great fire in Rome in the year 64 A.D. It raged for some nine days, destroying a large part of the city, and a sinister rumour arose that it was the emperor Nero's own doing. To dispel the report the blame was thrown upon the Christians. A large number were convicted 'not so much on the charge of arson as because of their hatred of humanity.' They were crucified, and even burned alive. The imperial gardens, where the Piazza and Basilica of St. Peter now stand, were lent for the horrible show. The hapless victims, in garments saturated with oil or pitch, were reserved for the illumination of races by night when Nero in the dress of a charioteer drove among the crowds.[1] Such a hideous outrage could not be forgotten. The story of it must have spread far and wide. But for thirty years there is no other reference to persecution in Rome, nor does secular history report any outbreak elsewhere. Distinguished scholars have, indeed, supposed that it was the Roman atrocity which really called forth the visions a few years after, but no known facts justify the expectation with which the martyrs beneath the altar are bidden to rest yet a little time till their fellow-servants and their brethren should have suffered like them (vi. 11). War against the Christians is, indeed, opened when the devil is cast down from heaven to earth (xii. 9, 10, 17). All who would not worship the image of the beast are to be killed (xiii. 15). What events could have begotten the anticipation of such universal massacre? Other New Testament literature is not without its shadows of impending danger. Already in the prophecy attributed to Jesus on the Mount of Olives the disciples are warned that they will have to stand before governors and kings for his sake (Mark xiii. 9). The author of Hebrews writes from a Church unnamed where many were imprisoned (x. 34); he bids

[1] See Prof. E. T. Merrill (Chicago), *Essays in Early Christian History* (1924), p. 83; cp. Renan, *Hibbert Lectures* (1880), p. 81.

those whom he addresses (also unnamed) remember their own fellow-sufferers (xiii. 3), and exhorts them to endure unweariedly as they have not yet 'resisted unto blood' (xii. 3, 4). Peter anticipates a fiery trial for the Christians of Asia Minor when some may suffer, not as murderers or thieves but 'according to the will of God' (1 Pet. iv. 12, 15, 19). Yet there is no indication that the imperial government at Rome had entered on any systematic course of extermination of a new religion.

One name, however, was associated with Nero's before the end of the second century, that of the Emperor Domitian, to whose reign (as we have seen) Irenæus assigned the composition of the Apocalypse. 'Nero and Domitian alone,' wrote Melito, Bishop of Sardis (between 160 and 190), 'misled by certain malignant persons, were disposed to exhibit enmity toward the doctrine held among us.' [1] The grounds of ill-treatment were, however, by this time more definite. The catastrophe of a great fire was a single isolated incident. Under Domitian the charge took a new form, when the refusal to pay religious homage to the Emperor seemed to imply disloyalty and treason. It is undoubtedly matter of historic fact that Domitian demanded the recognition of his divine character with far greater insistence than his predecessors.[2] To refuse the proper homage to the representative of the majesty of Rome was an act of disobedience approximating to treason. The accused might worship whatever other gods he pleased, but in this field he was liable to the charge of *atheotês*, which did not carry the wide meaning of the usual English translation 'atheism.' The term was frequently flung against the Jews, though their religion was recognised as 'lawful,' and Josephus could proudly recount a series of decrees conferring special privileges upon them. These did not, however, secure them immunity from occasional severe treatment, and they did not protect the fringe of associates who often joined them in worship without undertaking the full obligations of the Law. Jewish tradition preserved

[1] Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.* iv. 26, 9; cp. Merrill, p. 161.

[2] On the growth of this claim see below, Lect. II. p. 81.

many memories of ill-treatment under Domitian. He 'insisted on the payment of the Jews poll-tax, and levied it in the most humiliating manner.'[1] In the year 95 he suddenly arrested his cousin Flavius Clemens almost in the very consulship to which he had raised him, and his wife Domitilla (another cousin). 'Against them both,' says the abbreviator of the history of Dio Cassius, 'was brought the charge of "atheism," for which also many others were condemned who had drifted into the practices of the Jews.'[2] Clemens was put to death, and Domitilla was banished to the island of Pandateria on the west coast of Italy. It has been widely assumed that they and their fellow-sufferers were really all Christians,[3] against whom the same accusation was brought in the second century. Jewish tradition, however, claimed Clemens for the Synagogue, and related that the Patriarch Gamaliel with three companions journeyed from Palestine to Rome on hearing of a decree wrested from the Senate by Domitian for the extermination of the Jews throughout the Empire, and only witnessed his execution.[4] He belonged probably to the class whom the Book of Acts describes as 'devout persons' and worshippers of God (xvii. 17, xviii. 7), though Domitilla was alleged to have told the teachers of the Law that he had been circumcised before his death. The literary record on either side is uncertain. But archaeology supplies some trustworthy evidence. Domitilla was recalled from exile by Domitian's successor Nerva. Adjoining the burial-place of some at least of her connexions erected on her property, 'and (says Prof. Merrill) in immediate conjunction therewith, doubtless by her express gift, was constructed a

[1] Grätz, *History of the Jews* (Engl. ed. 1891), ii. p. 391. Suetonius himself witnessed the examination of an octogenarian to see if he were circumcised (*Dom.* xii., cp. Grätz, *Gesch.* iv. (1866), p. 118).

[2] Quoted by Prof. Merrill, *Essays in Early Christian History* (1924), p. 152.

[3] Thus Knopf (*Apostol. Zeitalter*, 1905, p. 89) plumply says, 'Statt der Anklage auf Gottlosigkeit wegen Judentums ist einzusetzen: wegen Christentums.' The later evidence on which this is founded is fully discussed by Prof. Merrill.

[4] Grätz, *Gesch.* iv. p. 121; a different account is given in the English *History*, ii. p. 390.

Christian cemetery, the earlier parts of which date back to the beginning of the second century.'[1] Whether Domitilla had become a Christian before her banishment cannot be positively determined. In any case, even if she had already persuaded her husband to join her, the earliest testimony does not support the view that Domitian directed a general prosecution against the whole Church, even in Rome, and the expectation of universal massacre which darkens the outlook of the Seer (xiii. 15) appears as illusory as the corresponding apprehension of the Jews. It has been doubted whether John refers to Domitian at all in his picture of the succession of the emperors (xvii. 10, 11).[2] Yet in view of the astounding assumption with which he described himself as 'Lord and God,' it may well be that in such a province as Asia where the cult of the imperial rulers was practised with oriental adulation, the resistance of the Christians was more frequent, and the resolution of magistrates for their subjection was more strenuous. Fresh incidents might easily rouse the indignation of believers from time to time, and impel the Apocalyptist to adapt fresh fragments out of the treasury of eschatologic dooms.[3] It is not unreasonable therefore to follow Irenæus in placing Revelation in its completed form in the reign of Domitian, though it may have received small explanatory additions even later, when it began to gain acceptance in the worship of the Church.

III

Who, then, was its author? The brief preface (i. 1-3), whether an original introduction or an editorial addition, possibly (as has been fancifully suggested) by the elders of Ephesus, ascribes it to a servant of Jesus Christ named John. The three verses each contain three clauses, and have a kind of rhythm which our translation fails to

[1] *Essays*, p. 168. The inscriptional and other evidence was first studied in the latter half of the last century.

[2] See Lect. V. p. 155.

[3] On the worship of the emperor, cp. Lect. II. p. 82.

convey. The source or origin of the Revelation is God, from whom comes all knowledge, wisdom, truth. Its channel of transmission was Jesus, who in his turn imparted it to his 'angel' for communication to God's servants the prophets (x. 7, xi. 18), and confirms its authority with the final declaration, 'I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things for the churches' (xxii. 16). In the traditions of ancient Israel the Angel of Yahweh had been the symbol or temporary personification of the divine Presence. Under the influence probably of later Persian thought the doctrine of angels received an immense expansion. Angels communicate divine revelations to Zechariah and Daniel. The Angel of the Presence (Isaiah lxiii. 9) instructed Moses on the mount to write the history of creation.[1] Angels of God taught Enoch the rule of the sun and showed him everything on earth and in the heavens; and an angel teacher similarly imparted to Abraham the lost knowledge of Hebrew, the tongue of the creation.[2] The Law was in like manner ordained by angels,[3] and they were the mediators of the knowledge of the future in the Apocalyptic books. The Angel of Jesus, however, soon gives place to Christ himself (i. 13); but at the close of the book he is identified with the angel of God who is empowered to show to his servants the prophets the things which must shortly come to pass (xxii. 6, 8, 9). This emphatic 'must' of eschatologic destiny is heard again and again in various applications throughout the book (iv. 1, xi. 5, xiii. 10, xvii. 10, xx. 3), and represents the fundamental conception of the moral government of the world (cp. Mark xiii. 7). The disclosure of the impending events constitutes a divine word, an utterance from on high; it has no relation to the Word which became flesh (John i. 14) and supplied a metaphysical explanation of the person of Jesus. It is, on the other hand, equated with the witness borne by Christ; and both are attested by John to whom the Revelation has been communicated. The preface concludes with blessings on the Church-reader and his

[1] Jubilees, i. 27, ii. 1. [2] *Ibid.* iv. 21, xii. 25, 26.
[3] Gal. iii. 19; Acts vii. 53.

hearers,[1] and the emphatic warning to heed the contents of the book, ' for the time is at hand.' [2]

The book is described as a ' prophecy.' The term at once opens up its connexion with a very important element in the activity of the early Church, the ministry of enthusiasm contrasted with that of office or administration. How it first appeared in the community at Jerusalem we do not know. The Book of Acts tells us that prophets went down from Jerusalem to Antioch, and one of them named Agabus predicted a great famine. Collections were accordingly made for the relief of the brethren in Judea, and were carried to the mother Church by Barnabas and Paul (xi. 27-30). But the function of the prophets was concerned with much more than the vicissitudes of nature. Living in the ardent hope of the return of Jesus in his character of Messiah and Judge, the believers were often impelled by strange forces within them to announce its immediacy. With the sober and less impassioned style of literature the Apostle Paul uttered his hopes and warnings to his converts at Thessalonica concerning the advent of the Lord and the prior manifestation of the Man of Sin (1 Thess. iv. 15-v. 3 ; 2 Thess. ii. 1-12). In the excitement of the Church meeting such predictions took a more ecstatic form ; the prophet spoke with rapture ; he was said to be ' in the Spirit.' The condition doubtless sometimes resembled that attributed by Socrates to diviners and holy prophets whom God ' uses as his ministers in order that we who hear them may know them to be speaking not of themselves who utter these priceless words in a state of unconsciousness, but that God himself is the speaker, and that

[1] The student may note that more blessings are scattered through the book : xiv. 13, xix. 9, xx. 6. xxii. 7, 14. Is it intentional that there are thus seven Beatitudes altogether ? If that view is adopted, the preface must be ascribed to the author himself.

[2] It is worth observing that these verses contain one or two words repeatedly used in the Apocalypse and also characteristic of the Fourth Gospel. Such is the term ' testimony ' or ' witness,' 9 times in Rev., 14 in John and 6 in 1 John (elsewhere only 7 times in the whole New Testament) ; ' keep,' followed by ' works, words, commandments,' etc., 10 in Rev., 12 in John, and 5 in 1 John. On the significance of such linguistic affinities see below, p. 47.

through them he is conversing with us.[1] The cultivated and critical Greek might mistrust such abnormal utterance. Paul found it necessary to warn his converts at Thessalonica not to despise prophesyings (1 Thess. v. 20). In the list of spiritual gifts he places prophecy first, then ministry, and thirdly teaching (Rom. xii. 6, 7). When he enumerates the various activities of the Church to the Corinthians, he ranges the prophets next to the apostles (1 Cor. xii. 28). The apostles and prophets are the foundation of the household of God (Ephes. ii. 20), to them has been revealed the mystery of Christ in the Spirit (iii. 5) ; and in the distribution of his gifts of grace Christ set some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers (iv. 11). The function was not limited to men ; Paul recognised it as exercised by women also (1 Cor. xi. 5) ; and the four daughters of Philip the evangelist at Caesarea could all prophesy (Acts xxi. 8, 9). The power was not without its dangers. The little manual of Church rule and piety known as ' The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles ' shows us that the purity of the first days of its function has begun to decline. The spontaneousness of the prophet's utterance has given way to a more formal leadership ; he may still travel like the apostolic missionary, but he sometimes appears to resemble the settled minister of a congregation. And false prophets must be discriminated from the true.[2] To order a meal in a rapture and eat it when the Spirit had departed, to demand money or other gifts, were sure signs of deception. In the second century at Rome the ' Shepherd ' (about 140) found it necessary to denounce the entry of Gentile divination into Christian ranks. For a time the energy of prophecy seemed to die out under the increasing pressure of ecclesiastical organisation and the growing authority of the congregational pastors or ' monarchical episcopate.' But it did not pass away without a protest. The New Prophecy, as it was called, which broke out under Montanus in Phrygia about 172, and spread rapidly through Asia and along North

[1] Plato, *Ion.* p. 534 ; tr. Jowett,[3] i. p. 502.

[2] Cp. Matt. vii. 15.

Africa till it touched Spain and Gaul, was really a revival of the type of speech in the first age of activity. It was concerned with the impassioned expectation of the immediate return of Christ. 'After me,' cried Maximilla, 'comes the end of the world.' The fiery soul of Tertullian, the Carthaginian lawyer, rhetorician, and priest, was captured by it. Writing against the heretic Marcion (iii. 24), he described the heavenly city, the New Jerusalem, which was seen in Judea by unbelievers for forty days suspended from the sky.

The New Prophecy throws some light upon the old. It was a product of the mysterious energy known as the Spirit. Filled with holy spirit (Luke i. 67) Zacharias addressed his child as a destined prophet of the Most High, who should make ready the ways of the Lord. The eschatologic hope took many forms, and the discourse ascribed to Jesus on the Mount of Olives which betrays its foundation on an apocalyptic document by a reference to its readers (Mark xiii. 14), supplied a scheme of prior woes for subsequent elaboration in the Church. New elements are added by the Apostle Paul. The hostile forces of the 'world-rulers' must be brought to nought by the exalted Son. Not till death itself is dead will the victory over evil be complete and every Principality and Authority and Power be abolished (1 Cor. xv. 24-26). To this gigantic warfare the recorded words of Jesus contain only remote allusions. The strong man must be bound to make way for the Rule of God, he tells the Pharisees, who bring the ridiculous charge that he casts out devils by Beelzebub (Matt. xii. 27-29).[1] When the seventy disciples report the success of their mission, he beholds already the fall of Satan accomplished, and evil for ever driven out of heaven (Luke x. 18). But this issue was not to be so swiftly compassed. The age-long conflict which would end with the dissolution of the existing scene, would first involve terrors of every kind, warnings to those who might yet be won to righteousness, and dooms upon the unrepentant and defiant. This was the theme of the early Christian prophecy, of which the Apocalypse

[1] On the binding of Beliar, cp. *ante*, p. 17.

is the most conspicuous and exalted example. The writer presents himself in that character throughout. As one of the servants of God (i. 1) he belongs to the great company led by Moses (xv. 3).[1] By the symbolic act of eating the book at the hand of the angel whose right foot is planted on the sea and his left on the land (x. 8-11), he is assimilated with Ezekiel, and heavenly voices bid him ' prophesy again.' When he wishes to do homage to his angel guide, falling at his feet, he is warned, ' See thou do it not, I am a fellow-servant with thee, and with thy brethren the prophets ' (xxii. 8). This is implied in his description of himself as being ' in Spirit ' on the Lord's day (i. 10). It is ' in Spirit ' that he ascends to the open door into heaven, and gazes on the throne and its majestic occupant (iv. 2). It is ' in Spirit ' that he is carried away into the wilderness to look upon the woman in purple and scarlet seated on the Beast (xvii. 3), and finally is borne on to a mountain great and high where he beholds the wondrous city coming down out of the sky (xxi. 10). Throughout the whole book the emphasis falls again and again upon the prophets. To them has God declared his good tidings (x. 7). The Church is composed of prophets and saints and those who fear his name (xi. 18). The martyred dead are saints and prophets (xvi. 6). Rome is condemned, for in her was found the blood of saints and prophets (xviii. 24) ; and when she falls heaven is summoned with the saints, apostles, and prophets to rejoice (xviii. 20).

Who, then, was John the prophet ? It may be that the question cannot be answered, but it is perhaps possible to determine who he was not. The student of early Christian history is constantly embarrassed by the uncertainties of its traditions. Whoever has seriously examined the evidence on which the Apostles Peter and Paul are supposed to have been martyred in Rome during the Neronian atrocity in 64, will be convinced that we really know nothing but conjectures as to where or how or when they died. Two Johns are connected with Ephesus in

[1] Unless (with Canon Charles, *Comm.* ii. p. 34) the reference to Moses is eliminated.

the province of Asia at the end of the first century, according to statements in the middle of the second century; John the son of Zebedee, brother of James, one of the Twelve; and another of unknown origin, but apparently once a disciple of Jesus, known as 'The Elder.'[1] Some time after the year 150 Justin, who had lived in Ephesus, attributes the Apocalypse to the Apostle.[2] The ascription is noteworthy, because although he frequently refers to records of the teaching of Jesus under the title 'Memoirs of the Apostles,' he nowhere mentions any Gospel by name. Irenæus, who had left Smyrna in early life,[3] when writing at Lyons soon after 180 referred all the Johannine writings to a single author, but his identification of his person is so loose that his meaning cannot be securely determined. It has been widely supposed that he meant the Apostle. But if so (it is urged) it is remarkable that out of 47 occurrences he should only give him that title twice, while he describes him 16 times as a 'disciple.'[4] The designation 'disciple of the Lord' was also applied to John the Elder. There were other elders in Asia who 'conferred with John the disciple of the Lord, . . . and some of them saw not only John, but also other Apostles.' No tradition connects any other of the Twelve with Asia, and it has been suggested, therefore, that Irenæus was using the term in the wider sense which it already bore in Paul's correspondence and later documents of the early Church.[5] If it was in that character of missionary preacher that he identified 'John the disciple of the Lord' as an Apostle, those who followed him assumed that he intended the son of Zebedee.

The identification is further embarrassed by the existence of another tradition derived from an earlier writer, Papias of Hierapolis (also in Asia Minor), to the effect

[1] On this personage see the discussion in Lecture I. on the Fourth Gospel, p. 213 ff.

[2] *Dialogue with Trypho*, lxxxi.

[3] *Ante*, p. 31.

[4] Burney, *The Aramaic Origin of the Fourth Gospel* (1922), p. 138 f., 14 times 'the disciple of the Lord.' But cp. Part II. p. 208.

[5] See the author's *Phases of Early Christianity* (1916), p. 150 ff.; 'Andronicus and Junias who are of note among the apostles,' Rom. xvi. 7.

that John the son of Zebedee suffered martyrdom at the hands of the Jews like his brother James, and consequently never was in Asia at all. It is not necessary to suppose that they perished at the same time, but his death, if it really occurred by such violence, must have happened before the destruction of Jerusalem in 70. The argument is reinforced by a reference to the promise of Jesus to the two brothers that they should drink his cup and be baptised with his baptism (Mark x. 39). The devout interpreter sees in these words a genuine prediction of their ultimate fate. The extremer German critic supposes that the original language of Jesus was shaped to meet the actual event. But it is possible that Jesus meant no more than that the pair who thought themselves marching with him to glory must be prepared to find themselves involved in his danger. It should be further remembered that we have not Papias's own words. The first reference to his statement occurs in an epitome of a Chronicle several centuries later. This is not, however, the only evidence pointing in the same direction. The student who examines the passages collected by Dr. Charles may not feel his confidence that the Papias tradition is ' removed from the sphere of hypothesis into that of reasonably established facts of history.' [1] But it must be admitted that the view of the relatively early death of the Apostle in Palestine has gained a large amount of assent, and renders it impossible for those who accept it to maintain his authorship of the Apocalypse.

What then of that other John, the Elder, whom Papias also describes as a ' disciple of the Lord ' ? Very eminent critics have agreed in identifying John the Seer of Patmos with the writer of two letters passing in our New Testament under the name of John (2 and 3 John) which open with the title ' The Elder.' [2] This view is supported by some faint analogies with the Apocalypse, such as a common antipathy to Gnostic speculation. But for those

[1] *Commentary*, i. p. xlix. Cp. below, on the Fourth Gospel, Lect. I. p. 209 ff.

[2] So Bousset, *Offenbarung*[2] (1906), p. 49 ; Moffatt, *Expositor's Bible*, v. (1910), p. 327, less confidently, as an alternative to pseudonymity ; cp. *Introd to N.T.* (1911), pp. 513, 480.

who have been accustomed to follow the tradition which associates the three Johannine letters with the Fourth Gospel these analogies are far outweighed by the immense difficulties of ascribing the Gospel and the Apocalypse to the same author.[1] It is true that the most eminent historian of early Christian literature, Prof. Harnack, has done so, and Prof. Burney recently accepted the same result. It may be desirable, therefore, briefly to indicate some characteristics which seem to be mutually incompatible.[2]

Both writers, it is generally admitted, were Jews.[3] But one writer approaches the fundamental questions of religion from the Hebrew side, the other from the Greek. For the Seer of Patmos, God is the Almighty, a title repeated twelve times, with a significant frequency, for it is used by no other New Testament writer, occurring only once in a quotation (2 Cor. vi. 18). Its essential idea is that of power. God is the sovereign of the universe as its creator ; by his will all things exist ; he uses them as the instruments of his beneficence or his wrath, and they join with his angels ten thousand times ten thousand in the great acclaim of glory and might for ever and ever. But he is not only Lord of heaven and earth and sea, he is also

[1] The linguistic affinities of 2 and 3 John with the Gospel and 1 John have been set forth with great care by Dr. Charles, *Commentary*, i. pp. xxxiv-xxxvii, xli-xliii.

[2] Cp. *Phases of Early Christianity*, pp. 6-10. Technical difficulties arising from peculiarities of language cannot be discussed here. It must be enough to quote the comments of Dionysius, head of the Catechetical School at Alexandria (232) till he became bishop (247, probably till his death, 265). ' His criticism on the style of the Apocalypse,' says Dr. Westcott, ' is perhaps unique among early writers for clearness and scholarly precision.' The passage is cited by Eusebius, *Eccl. Hist.* vii. 25. The Gospel and the Epistles, he says, ' were written not only without error as regards the Greek language, but also with elegance in their expression, in their reasonings, and in their entire structure.' They are far, indeed, from betraying any barbarism or solecism or any vulgarism whatever. ' I do not deny,' he adds, ' that the other writer saw a revelation, and received knowledge and prophecy. I perceive, however, that his dialect and language are not accurate Greek, but that he uses barbarous idioms, and, in some places, solecisms.'

[3] Prof. Grill (Tübingen) has, indeed, recently argued (1923), like M. Loisy, that the Fourth Evangelist was really a Greek, who afterwards acquired a knowledge of Jewish usages and language. See below, p. 257.

the ruler of the nations. All peoples are beneath his sway, and however his dominion may be impaired by resistance or disputed by rebellious forces, his purpose cannot be defeated when he thinks fit to take his great power and reign (xi. 17). To this majestic event all history is the prelude. The rise and fall of empires are the march of a vast world-drama, advancing to its predestined end. Time is conceived as a series of periods culminating in the divine triumph, and the recognition of God as 'King of the ages' (xv. 3). Eternity is accordingly presented as an endless succession of 'ages of ages' (a formula recurring twelve times). And in the midst of the heavenly court God sits enthroned above earth's battles, in person like sparkling jewels, supported by four mysterious living creatures full of eyes before and behind,[1] with four and twenty elders round about, seven burning torches immediately in front and a glassy sea beyond, while a vast concourse of angels wait to do his bidding, and execute the dooms which vindicate his rule. No such vision is vouchsafed to the Evangelist. His fundamental conception is that God is Spirit. That cannot be located anywhere, it is independent of all space-relations. True, our experience recognises a difference between things above and things beneath, but it is moral, not measurable in altitudes of feet or miles, nor to be traversed, by ascent or descent. The sphere of light, life, truth, love, abides though all things change. These constitute the very being of God, unshaken by vicissitude. The realm of spirit is a realm of permanence, where the eternal Thought dwells in the bosom of the Father in timeless unity. Impossible to divide that into an age that now is and an age that is to arrive, still less to distribute it along a line of ages without end. There is but one 'æon,' no Apocalyptic 'æons of æons,' but it includes 'for ever.'[2] So it is not needful to describe God as he 'who was and is and is to come.' Past, present, and future, are all one in the infinite Mind, and the divine Son impersonated in Jesus can simply say 'I AM' (viii.

[1] See below, Lect. III. p. 94 f.

[2] Greek, literally 'for the æon' or 'age,' 13 times.

58). Can such a figure be represented with hair as white as wool, and eyes of flame, and feet like burnished brass, and a two-edged sword issuing from his mouth, or riding on a white horse robed in a garment drenched with blood, at the head of an army of celestial cavalry, to tread the wine-press of the fury of the Almighty wrath ? Is it not evident that the two books are conceived in far distant spheres of thought, and can the interval have been leaped by the same mind ?

The Gospel is thus concerned to portray an inner fellowship founded on a unity of spiritual life between man and God, mediated by Christ as his Son. The conception of God's sovereignty over the universe is replaced by that of his eternal activity, ' My Father worketh hitherto,' in the bestowal of the gifts and graces needful for salvation. The kingdom is no longer the centre of Jesus' teaching and hope, it is mentioned but once (iii. 3-5). The summons to repentance first proclaimed by the Baptist, renewed by Jesus, and committed by him to the Twelve (Mark vi. 12), is nowhere heard, though it is urged again and again upon the Churches themselves by the exalted Christ, and neither those who were not killed with the plagues nor those who suffered from them learned the lesson which they were intended to teach (ix. 20, 21, xvi. 9, 11). For the Apocalyptist the twelve tribes of the Children of Israel supply the first groups of the ' sealed,' and even if these be no longer understood in a narrow literal sense, the national tradition plainly prompts the enumeration (vii. 4-8). With such yearnings after racial regeneration the Evangelist has no sympathy. Though Jesus declared to the Samaritan woman that salvation came from the Jews, they are almost uniformly represented as stubborn, uncomprehending, and hostile ; and he meets their rising anger with the bitter words, ' Ye are of your father the devil ' (viii. 44). Jerusalem is still the centre of worship for the Christian prophet. The religion of a new heaven and a new earth requires a new Holy City to match. It can, indeed, dispense with temple and altar, as it can also with sun and moon. But the worship of God in spirit and in truth is independent of

mountain sanctuaries, whether on Gerizim or Zion. It is universalised. The uplifted Christ will draw all men unto him.

Thus shall be consummated the mission of Jesus of Nazareth to seek and to save the lost. In the fierce anger of the Seer with the world's cruelty and lust, parents and children, the oppressor and the oppressed, suffer and perish together. Vast armies of the nations are devoured by fire from heaven, and the godless are overtaken by universal destruction. It is with relief, though not without surprise, that we find the gates of the new Jerusalem always open, and the kings of the earth adding their glory to its unfading light. The First Letter knows of no such orgy of wrath, and draws no such pictures of international felicity. It raises no standard of revolt against the pride and luxury of imperial sway, embodied in the figure of the Woman in purple and scarlet, adorned with gold and jewels seated upon the seven-headed ten-horned Beast. Its Antichrist is no world-power coming up from the Abyss. It has shrunken to a group of false teachers (1 John ii. 18, 22, iv. 3), leaders of a corruption within the Church itself, professors of vain knowledge all founded in deceit. The lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the vainglory of life, may be full of peril, but they are in the background. The real adversary is the Deceiver who denies that Jesus came in the flesh. The growing popularity of this heresy takes the place of apocalyptic tribulations, and warns the believer that the last hour is already running out. But it is no longer to be followed by a great gathering of quick and dead before the throne. It is one of the paradoxes of the Gospel that though Christ did not come to judge the world but to save it (xii. 47), he nevertheless did come into this world for judgment (ix. 39). His simple presence carried discrimination with it, so that evil-doers shunned the light and severed themselves from it, while it attracted towards it the doers of the truth (iii. 19-21). The terrors of the lake of fire have vanished, but blindness darkened the vision of those who said they saw. Is that a final doom? In his last prayer Jesus anticipated that the might of

Christian truth and unity will bring the world to recognise his mission from God, and that faith carries within it the secret of eternal life.

Such are some of the differences of conception between the two books which were both attributed within a hundred years of their composition to the same author. They issue from the same group of Churches, they have a common root of faith in God and Christ, but their presentations of these transcendent personalities vary so widely that they cannot be regarded as the creations of a single mind. Between the Jesus who is 'the root and offspring of David, the bright and morning star,' destined to smite the nations and rule them with a rod of iron, the heir of prophetic hope, the hero of a religious imperialism, and the Word made flesh, the bond of the universe and the centre of a mysterious union between God and man, there is a gulf which no combination of imagination and metaphysics can bridge. Yet there are not a few delicate indications of the use of current forms of speech which imply that the Seer and the Evangelist had a similar background of religious life and teaching. They sometimes employ the same terms though with varying application, they use the same figures though by different names. Both lay great stress on the importance of the testimony or witness borne by Christ, and the disciple's duty to continue it. If Jesus has overcome the world, the believer also must learn to 'overcome.'[1] Both represent Christ as having received authority from his Father (Rev. ii. 27; John x. 18), but for what diverse ends! Both lay stress on the duty of 'keeping' Christ's word, as all Church teachers naturally enjoined.[2] Both use the symbol of the Lamb, though the descriptive terms are not identical. The same passage from Zechariah is cited, though in wholly different connexions (Rev. i. 7, John xix. 37). The pastoral care of the Shepherd,

[1] The Apocalyptist does not mention the enemy which has to be 'conquered' (ii. 7. etc., 12 times; cp. John xvi. 33, 1 John ii. 13, iv. 4, v. 4).

[2] 'Keep the commandments (words).' Matt. xix. 17; John viii. 51, 52, 55, xiv. 15, 21, 23, 24, xv. 10, 20, xvii. 6; 1 John ii. 3, 4, 5, iii. 22, 24, v. 3; Rev. i. 3, iii. 8, 10, xii. 17, xiv. 12, xxii. 7, 9.

manna, living water, the Bride, appear in the imagery of each. Such parallels suggest proximity of origin, the influence of a common stock of devotional idiom and illustration. If the Elder John belonged to Ephesus, John the Seer could not have lived far off. The Church had room for diverse types of thought and utterance. There could be no greater proof of the vitality of Christian life and experience towards the close of the first century of our era than the production out of the same community in Asia of two such books as the Apocalypse and the Fourth Gospel.

IV

The Apocalypse was launched, like the Gospel itself, into an immense conflict of thought and life. The province of Asia in which it was written gathered into itself a multitude of influences from both East and West. The religions and the science of Babylonia and Persia met the faiths of Egypt and the philosophies of Greece. The Christian communities which were formed on the model of the Synagogue, inherited the fundamental teachings of the Hebrew Scriptures; they were at the same time confronted with the conceptions of popular mythology, the constant practice of all kinds of public ritual, the wide-spread belief in astrology, the educated interest in the problems of metaphysics, and the power of Rome. That the Apocalypse, like the rest of the early literature of the Church, should reflect some of these alien elements, is not surprising. Its imaginative presuppositions, its view of the world, its conceptions of God, of man, and human destiny, were all derived from Judaism. To the lectures of the professors in the schools its author paid no heed.[1] It employs frankly modes of presentation and intercourse with superhuman powers belonging to accepted forms of revelation of which it may be worth while to offer some illustrations.

[1] Whatever view be taken of the sudden introduction of the title 'Word of God' in xix. 13 (see, for example, the opposite judgments of Moffatt and Charles), the description of the divine horseman whose garment is drenched in the blood of his enemies removes him as far as possible from John i. 1.

The book takes the form of a letter addressed to 'the Seven Churches of Asia' (i. 4); introduced by counsels and warnings appropriate to each of the group, and communicating what the prophet had seen and what had yet to happen.[1] Rapt on the Lord's Day into ecstasy, he is transported to the sky where a door is opened in the firmament, and he is permitted to gaze upon the majestic Person on the throne above. By such a passage through the air had Ezekiel been conveyed from his Babylonian exile to witness the abominations in the Temple at Jerusalem. So Baruch is borne aloft over the city wall, and beholds four angels standing at its four angles, each with a lamp of fire in his hands. So Enoch under angelic guidance had journeyed through the universe among the stars; and so Isaiah, in a Christian vision not far distant in time from the Apocalypse,[2] is raised on high by a glorious angel, and conducted through the successive heavens to the seventh, where he hears the voice of the Most High bid Christ descend.[3] From the entry into the sublime sanctuary above the scene changes to the Mediterranean, or to the Temple at Jerusalem, to the seashore (reading 'I stood,' xiii. 1, with many moderns), to the wilderness, or to the Holy City, with equal ease, as the Seer travels through space and time. Greek legend had its own tales of wonder. Already in the days of Herodotus they had gathered round Abaris and Aristæus. Abaris was sent by Apollo from the Hyperboreans to Greece and passed through the air from place to place, like Musæus, possessed by the god (*entheos*), accomplishing purifications and communicating oracles. Aristeas could leave his body like a corpse and return to it at will after voyaging elsewhere.[4] The Christian Apocalyptist described Isaiah when summoned by the angel as still

[1] On the Seven Churches as representative of the whole Church see below, Lect. II. p. 63.

[2] Cp. *ante*, p. 16.

[3] Compare the curious passage cited by Origen from the Gospel according to the Hebrews, 'My mother the Holy Spirit took me just now by one of my hairs and carried me up to the great mountain Tabor.' Cp. M. R. James, *The Apocryphal N.T.* (1924), p. 2.

[4] Rohde, *Psyche* [3] (1903), ii. p. 91 f.

open-eyed though seeing no one, for 'the mind in his body was taken up from him.'[1] Philo, who knew all about the pretensions of the astrologers and their claims to touch the things in the sky by the rapture of the soul, describes the practice of wisdom whether among Greeks or barbarians as enabling them with bodies, indeed, planted firmly on the earth but with wings to their souls, to follow round about with their minds the courses of moon and sun and the company of the stars.[2] He himself claimed to have been rapt on high by some inspiration, and enjoyed similar communion with sun and moon and the whole heaven and the world.[3] A century and a half before our era the mythic king Nechepso had imparted secrets of astrology to the Egyptian priest Petosiris. Spending the night in prayer, he felt himself caught up from the body, and heard the voice of a mysterious Person veiled in a dark robe sounding from the sky.[4] For some two centuries (50 B.C.-150 A.D.) a series of instructions was produced in the name of Hermes Trismegistus, the Thrice Great, sometimes communicated to Asklepios and Anubis.[5] There were Chaldean Oracles and Phrygian Books. Divine voices were heard everywhere, by Baruch and Ezra and many a Jewish Rabbi as well as by John.[6] Krates told how he was lifted from the earth and borne to the courses of sun and moon, saw

[1] Ascension, vi. 11.

[2] *De Somn.* i. 10, ed. Cohn-Wendland, vol. iii. p. 216; *De Spec. Leg.* ii. 45; *ibid.* vol. v. p. 97. Cp. Boll, *Aus der Offenbarung* (1914), p. 6.

[3] *Ibid.* iii. 1, vol. v. p. 150.

[4] Reitzenstein, *Poimandres* (1904), p. 4 f.

[5] This is the date suggested by Cumont, *Astrology and Religion*, (1912), p. 77; cp. below, p. 304. In the tenth of the special Hermetic tracts, known as 'The Key' (cp. Prof. Walter Scott, *Hermetica*, vol. i.), Hermes declares the exalted power of ecstasy, which enables man without leaving the ground to ascend on high. This was surpassed by the Indian ascetics who were believed to be able to reach the sky in person, and mount to one or other of the worlds above. But the knowledge acquired by their discipline rendered divine instruction unnecessary, and no messenger-guide was required from heaven. Legend, of course, ascribed the power to the Buddha, who ascended to the heaven of Brahmā and conversed with its supreme occupant as his superior.

[6] Such voices were known in Palestine by the name of Bath Qol, 'the daughter of the voice.'

Hermes Trismegistus, and was instructed by an angel who bade him write what he had heard.[1] The labours of an unwearied band of scholars (led by Boll, Cumont, and Kroll) have brought to light a mass of literature extending through many centuries concerned with the correlation of the heavens and the earth. Founded on Babylonian star-cults and partially systematised by Hellenic science, astrology acquired enormous influence in the first century of our era. On the birth of Octavian the Pythagorean philosopher Nigidius Figulus was said to have predicted from the stars the imperial greatness of the future Augustus Cæsar.[2] Astrology was a kind of inductive prophecy adapted to a stable world. In contrast with Apocalyptics it was founded on observation of the Order of Nature, interpreted by rules revealed from Heaven. The thunders and lightnings, the famines and plagues, the earthquakes and eclipses, which play so large a part in Revelation, were all tabulated under the signs of the zodiac.[3] When the expectation of Christ's return to bring the existing scene to a close faded away, and the stream of Apocalyptic production ceased, astrology remained in possession of the field, and enlisted Christian expositors in its support.[4] It held its own through the Middle Ages, and was backed by the great name of Kepler. It is not, therefore, surprising if some of the figures in the visions of John should be derived directly or indirectly from its conceptions.

Like other seers John presents his thought in pictorial form. He is not concerned with his own personal history, he has no inner struggles to relate. The drama which he will portray is on the scale of the universe. Its scenes must, consequently, take the most concrete shapes.

[1] *Poim.* p. 361, in an Arabic translation from a lost Greek original.

[2] F. Boll, *Sphaera* (1904), p. 361. On the general subject see Cumont's *Lectures on Astrology and Religion among the Greeks and Romans* (1912).

[3] See the eight volumes of the *Catal. Cod. Astrologorum* edited during this century under the direction of Boll and Cumont. Cp. Wisdom of Sol. xiii. 2, where the 'circle of the stars' is no doubt the zodiac.

[4] A 'brontology' was ascribed to 'David the prophet,' *Catal.* vii. pt. 3, p. 168. There are traces of Apocalypses attached to the names of Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Eldad and Modad, Elijah, many of the prophets down to Zacharias (father of the Baptist), Peter, Paul, Thomas, Stephen, some of them being heretical.

When George Fox first wrestled with his own temptations in dire distress and cried to the Lord night and day, he went back to Nottinghamshire (in 1647). There, he related, 'the Lord showed me that the natures of those things which were hurtful without, were within, though people had been looking without. I cried unto the Lord, saying, "Why should I be thus, seeing I was never addicted to commit those evils?" And the Lord answered that it was needful I should have a sense of all conditions, how else could I speak to all conditions? and in this I saw the infinite love of God. I saw also that there was an ocean of darkness and death, but an infinite ocean of light and love, which flowed over the ocean of darkness. In that also I saw the infinite love of God, and I had great openings.' Such vision was purely abstract and indefinite. Whether it was actually accompanied by physical consciousness of central gloom encompassed and transcended by actual radiance we cannot tell. The experience was absolutely certain, but without locality or form. It was something given, not wrought out from within. But Fox, too, might have used the figure of the door to describe his 'openings.'[1] The theme of the Apocalypse is really cosmic. The authors of Baruch and 4 Ezra, contemporary with John, are in like manner occupied with the whole problem of human history, its catastrophes of sin and suffering, the end of one age and the inauguration of another. For John the problem is presented on the issue of world-empire and the Satanic power working through it against Christ. Gigantic forces are summoned. The whole armies of the universe are mobilised; the majesty of heaven, the deeps of hell, are alike revealed. What inner impulses prompted his thought we cannot tell. But the solemnities and the terrors which he describes have not actually been seen. He unquestionably depicts them as realities. He believes that they exist or will happen as he sets them forth. But they are as plainly products of imagination working in a white heat of moral passion as the cantos of Dante or the dreams

[1] Cp. Rev. iv. 1, and the interesting parallel in another connexion in Ascens. Isai. vi. 6, 9.

of Bunyan. His visions have been composed in the recollection of the emotion with which his first thoughts were invested. They have sometimes been suggested by scattered fragments of apocalyptic tradition. They are occasionally interrupted by unexpected and incongruous incidents. They are combined in forms of bewildering complexity. They are the result, that is, of a literary process, founded on different sources, spread over many years, and yet the issue of a continuous purpose bearing in the completed result the manifest impress of a single mind.

Depending often for his actual words as well as for his fundamental conceptions on the speech of ancient prophecy, the Seer naturally gives prominence to special aspects of the character and activity of Deity. In view of the colossal struggle between Christ and Satan which is the culmination of all history, the incidents of the past affecting the fortunes of Israel are thrown out of sight. Here is no devoted Jew, playing the part of a second Moses on a reduced scale, and mourning like Baruch the fall of his beloved Jerusalem ; still less a Scribe like Ezra whose heart-strings are torn by the inexpressible tragedy of his people's sin and the whole world's wickedness, for which no intercession will be admitted at the last day. The election of Israel is, indeed, implied in the central place of the Holy City with its twelve gates corresponding to the Twelve Tribes and the mysterious hundred and forty-four thousand of the Sealed (vii. 1-8). But the disappearance of the Temple awakes no sorrow, and the Law of worship which had been their privilege and delight has passed out of sight with only a momentary and futile recognition (xi. 1, 2). Over the catastrophes of time is the throne of the everlasting God. To him the whole universe brings its adoring homage, ' For thou didst create all things, and because of thy will they were, and were created ' (iv. 11). He is thus the Eternal ' which is and which was and which is to come,' living for ever and ever ; [1] and he is

[1] ' For ages of ages,' thirteen times in Rev. ; frequent in the singular in the Greek O.T., but only once in the plural, Ps. lxxxiii. 4. Eight times in seven books in N.T.

also the Almighty in majestic transcendence,[1] the Sovran Ruler of the world, the Only Holy.

The visible scene is conceived after Jewish fashion in three great zones, heaven, earth, and the abyss beneath. The lake of fire is as real to the Seer as the sanctuary above the firmament or the great white throne. He does not use them as Plato does the flaming river Pyriphlegethon or the solemn tribunal of the under-world as picturesque figures, the artistic vesture of moral truths; the things that are to happen are to happen as he describes them. Moreover, between earth and heaven are strange correspondences. For hundreds of years the Babylonian star-gazers had watched the skies and built up a mighty harmony between the upper and the lower worlds. Tier above tier rose above the firmament, and the variety of terrestrial objects, temples, mountains and rivers, reflected by a kind of harmony the details of the celestial regions. On this mode of thought the speculations of Israel also had been engaged. In the third heaven, as the Apostle Paul tells us, was Paradise, where Enoch saw the tree of life.[2] Above in the fourth the Rabbis placed the heavenly temple with the altar at which the heavenly Michael offered sacrifice. Multitudes of angels controlled the movements and operations of nature; no plant, said Rabbi Simon, but has a star in heaven which bids it grow;[3] they hold back the four destructive winds, sound the seven trumpet-signals, let loose the plagues, open and close the abyss. And the whole scheme of things in space and time is bound together by mysterious coincidences of number. Against God, Christ, and Michael are arrayed Satan, the Beast, and the False Prophet. Of such an unholy combination there is no trace in the contemporary books of Baruch or Ezra. But they, too, like the Apocalypse, play with threes and fours,[4] and their multiple

[1] Frequent in the O.T., and eight times in Rev. Elsewhere only in a quotation, 2 Cor. vi. 18.

[2] Secrets of Enoch, viii. 3.

[3] Midrash on Genesis, x., tr. Wünsche, p. 41. The stars had long been conceived as animated.

[4] Three ways, three similitudes, 4 Ezr. iv. 3; four angels, Bar. vi. 4.

twelve. Ezra sees the whole period of the world's duration divided into twelve parts, of which nine and a half have passed already ; Baruch figures its course as a twelve-fold succession of mighty clouds of waters black and white, till the twelfth brightens for the advent of the Messiah.[1] Above all seven holds the predominance which it had acquired for hundreds of years from Babylon to Greece.[2] Already in the century before Plato Hipparchus had collected a variety of illustrations of the seven-fold constitution of the universe and its spheres. Were there not seven seasons, seven winds, seven ages of men, seven parts of the body, seven functions of the head, seven vowels ?[3] In the Apocalyptic literature this number is firmly planted on imagination. The Enoch books employ it repeatedly (1 Enoch, seven mountains, seven rivers, seven holy ones, seven classes of angels, seven virtues ; 2 Enoch, seven heavens, seven substances and natures of man, etc.). Ezra lays out seven ways for scorners and seven orders for the righteous, and he and Baruch both fast several times for seven days. The number enters into the scheme of the Apocalypse at the outset in the address to the seven Churches. To it are adapted the

[1] Cp. 4 Ezr. xiv. 11, with Box's note ; Bar. liii. 6, lxxii. 1, 2. The number 3 is of constant recurrence implicitly in the Apoc. in connexion with time, i. 4, 17 (cp. 8, 19), xvii. 8, xxii. 13 ; and lurks in groups such as i. 9, 'the tribulation, and kingdom, and patience' : ii. 2, 'thy works, and thy toil, and thy patience,' cp. ii. 3, 5 ; viii. 7 ; x. 6. Cp. Norden, *Agnostos Theos* (1913), p. 351.

[2] The number turns up in India also, *e.g.* in the Seven Rishis who typified the ancient singers, already mentioned four times in the Rig Veda. For other Indian sevens cp. the author's essay on 'Buddhist and Christian Parallels' in *Studies in the History of Religions* (presented to Crawford Howell Toy, New York, 1912), p. 76. In later Judaism a curious illustration will be found in the Midrash on Leviticus, xxix. (tr. Wünsche, p. 205), seven names for heaven, seven for earth, the seventh being beloved ; so Enoch, the seventh from Adam, and Moses from Abraham, etc.

[3] α, ϵ, η, ι, o, υ, ω. As signs of the heavenly spheres in connexion with Pythagorean views they constituted a heptachord. Cp. Dieterich, *Abraxas* (1891), p. 22 ; Roscher, *Die Hippokratische Schrift von der Siebenzahl* (1913). Cp. further instances in Clem. Alex. *Stromata*, ed. Stählin (1906), vi. §§ 143-145. He refers to a book 'on the Number Seven' by Hermippus of Beirut, a disciple of Philo of Byblus (age of Hadrian).

Spirits of God, the Angels of the Churches, the Seals of the Book of Dooms, the Trumpets, and the Bowls. Behind it lies the strange figure $3\frac{1}{2}$ (xi. 9, 11), first introduced in Daniel (as the division of a week, ix. 25-27). Half of a week of years comprises forty-two months, during which the Holy City shall be trodden under foot (xi. 2) ; for the same period is the Beast possessed of his authority (xiii. 5). The two witnesses prophesy for the equivalent 1260 days (xi. 3), and the Lady once vested in the sun is nourished during a like season in the wilderness (xii. 6, 14). The years of the Messiah's reign on earth rise from Ezra's 400 (vii. 28) to the Seer's 1000 (xx. 4) during which Satan lies bound in the abyss, till in the new heaven and the new earth the computations of time are needed no more ; the keepers of chronology in sun and moon disappear ; and the successions of the hours are merged in unfading light.

When and how would this great change take place ? The apprehension of so many elements of number among the objects and beings in the world suggested that the world itself also had a number. In other words, its duration was already determined in the plans of God. Baruch [1] is aware that there are ' methods ' and ' mysteries ' of ' the times ' (xiv. 1, lxxxi. 4). They are apparently dependent on the completion of the number of the human race (xxiii. 5). That, also, was divinely fixed. A similar problem haunted Ezra, who anxiously asked his angel teacher Uriel, ' How long, and when shall these things come to pass ? ' It was the same question, he is told, which the souls of the righteous had asked in their chambers of rest, and the archangel Jeremiel made answer, ' Even when the number is fulfilled of them that are like unto you ' (4 Ezra iv. 33-36). When the fifth seal was opened and the Seer beheld the souls of the martyrs beneath the altar in the heavenly temple, the corresponding principle was applied to their experience of persecution and suffering. The tale of their consecrated

[1] In the following paragraphs ' Baruch ' and ' Ezra ' are used to denote books under their respective names, without regard to any critical analysis of their constituent materials.

deaths must first be fulfilled (Rev. vi. 9-11). Behind these speculations loomed vaguer and uncertain hints, perhaps a succession of twelve periods,[1] perhaps a week where each day was reckoned as a thousand years, and the Sabbath was provided for the reign of Christ.[2] But Jew and Christian alike were assured that the end could not be far off.[3] Ezra saw the world 'hasting fast to pass away' (iv. 26). Baruch is convinced that 'its youth is past, the strength of creation is already exhausted, and the advent of the times is very short. The pitcher is near to the cistern and the ship to the port' (lxxxv. 10). Almost in the same words Ezra laments, 'The world hath lost its youth and the times begin to wax old' (xiv. 10). 'The judge will come and will not tarry' asserts Baruch emphatically (xlviii. 39). 'Behold I come quickly,' says the Apocalyptic Christ. But not all the radiance which Ezra sees investing the heavenly treasure of immortality can console him for the awful fact that 'the Most High hath made this world for many, but the world to come for few' (viii. 1). When he learns that 'there be many created, but few shall be saved,' he may well answer, 'Swallow down understanding then, O my soul' (viii. 3, 4). In spite of peremptory warning, 'Ask thou no more questions concerning the multitude of them that perish' (viii. 55), he cannot refrain from expostulating once more, and it is only when the sufferer is taught in a vision that he learns to keep his sorrow to himself, to acknowledge the decree of God to be just, and realises the glory of the wondrous city to come (x. 15, 16, 49, 50). It is the old problem of Job in a new setting, 'Wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be justified?' and the answer is equally inconclusive. But there is a profound hint in the angel's question, 'Lovest thou that people better than he that made them?' (v. 33). Had Ezra gone a little farther he might have seen with Dante that over the gate of torments there was written, 'Made by the primal Wisdom and the primal Love.'

[1] Cp. *ante*, p. 55. [2] See Lect. VI. p. 170.

[3] Cp. the question of the disciples to Jesus on the Mount of Olives, and the answer attributed to him (Matt. xxiv. 3, 34, 35).

For Baruch there was no problem, nor was there for John. When (in Baruch's phrase, liv. 19) 'Every man is his own Adam,' he has only himself to thank for his own sins and his own punishment. Baruch is not perplexed by the 'grain of evil seed sown in the heart of Adam from the beginning' (4 Ezra iv. 30). John can throw the whole mass of the world's sin on to the Devil and his associates, and summon the fury of the divine Wrath to chastise it. With appalling insistence this dread Power (unnamed by Baruch or Ezra) pursues its way through the succession of dooms.[1] Its vehemence is intensified by the prospect of the sufferings of the Christians. The common enemy of all three on earth is Rome. It has held the whole compass of the earth in grievous oppression; it has afflicted the meek, hurt the peaceable, hated them that speak truth, exalted itself more than the cedars of Lebanon (4 Ezra xi. 40-42; Bar. xxxix. 5). Its last leader, therefore, shall be judged by the Messiah on Mount Zion. But before his advent there will be dire tribulations (divided by Baruch, xxvii, into twelve parts) of the usual type, social disorders, droughts, famines, earthquakes, terrors, wars, strange stupor and madness, till God's Son shall be revealed. Then the nations will be gathered against him on Mount Zion (4 Ezr. xiii. 35). But he will need no army of horsemen, wield no spear, employ no engine of war. The breath of his lips, to use the ancient phrase, will slay his enemies; wind, fire, and storm, will come forth out of his mouth. There he will reign till the time of his presence is fulfilled (Bar. xxx. 1). Baruch, indeed, refrains from fixing its duration, but implies that he will return in glory to heaven. Ezra boldly limits his reign to four hundred years (vii. 28) which close in death, and all the inhabitants of the world die with him. For seven days the earth lies in 'the old silence' of its first creation. The resurrection will follow, and the Most High will be revealed upon the place of judgment. For the Messiah there is no further function. Not even John assigns him a seat on the august tribunal at the

[1] Rev. vi. 16, 17; xi. 18; xiv. 10, 19; xv. 1, 7; xvi. 1, 19; xix. 15.

great white throne.[1] But the Christian Seer cannot be satisfied with a Paradise opened, a tree of life accessible, a city builded (4 Ezr. viii. 52), a heavenly Jerusalem prepared before Paradise itself (Bar. iv. 3), without the tender shepherding of the Lamb. The Wrath is over, like the curse. And as the vision dies away the last utterance is heard from the heavenly Witness to whom God had first granted it, 'Yea I come quickly,' and the suffering Church responds, 'Amen: come, Lord Jesus.'

The ground of judgment is in each case the same. When the books are opened (Bar. xxiv. 1; Rev. xx. 12) it is that the dead may be judged according to their works. There are those to whom 'the law has been a hope, and understanding an expectation, and wisdom a confidence' (Bar. li. 7). So Ezra adds to the works which will enable a man to escape condemnation the inward alternative 'or his faith by which he has believed' (ix. 7); but the number, alas, is still pitifully small. There are those, says Baruch (xliv. 14, 15), 'who have preserved the truth of the law,' 'but the dwelling of the rest who are many will be in the fire.' The fate of the kings of the earth and their armies who are slain by the celestial horsemen in the Apocalypse is left obscure. They are not apparently sent to join the Beast and the False Prophet in the burning lake. And in the final conflict which follows the millennial reign of Christ and the saints, when Satan is let loose from the abyss, and the nations of the earth are gathered from its four corners under his lead, while the Deceiver himself is flung into the lake of fire to make an end of the evil Trio, it is enough for the invaders that they should be consumed by fire from heaven. Their punishment, however, is only deferred. Resurrection awaits them. Their names will not be found in the book of life, and they, too, pass into the dreadful second death, the flame that does not purify or consume but torments for ever.

The themes of Jewish Apocalypse are thus presented in the Revelation on a scale immeasurably enhanced. They are sometimes entangled in strange incoherences, they are

[1] Rev. xx. 11. Contrast iii. 5, 21.

embarrassed by irreconcilable details. But their scope has been immensely enlarged. A passionate intensity burns through their most grotesque incidents. A new atmosphere pervades the grimmest scenes. The Wrath and its terrors have a much deeper purpose than the manifestation of the divine anger, dread as that is ; it is the awful agent for the elimination of evil and the restoration of right relations between man and his Maker. Hence the pictures of the redeemed are filled with a glow of hope which has captured the imagination of Christendom. The Messianic salvation is realised with extraordinary vividness. The person of the Messiah is brought into the front of the picture. He is already known for he has actually lived and died. No local title, indeed, identifies him as Jesus of Nazareth. But he has not come up out of the sea in the likeness of a man, or flown with the clouds of heaven (4 Ezra xiii. 3) ; he is the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David. And he has been slain and has risen, and is alive for evermore. The tie of nationality may remain, but the limits of race no longer confine his redeeming work. No need any more of elaborate arguments to explain why the Cross brought the Law to an end. The great liberation has been effected, and out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation a kingdom and priests have been gathered for God. In the wealth and luxury of Ephesus with its varieties of population and trade from East to West the Seer could feel the power and pomp of imperial Rome. It was the symbol of the forces of evil still potent even in the realms above and ruling the wide fields of air, but destined at last to be brought to nought that God might be ' all in all.'

This conflict is the theme of the whole book. As the reader passes from the seven letters which introduce it, he is often conscious of a strange contrast. These little Churches with their common-place faults, their false teachings, their low level of performance,—what place have they in the gigantic catastrophes that follow ? It is part of the genius of the author that it does not seem strange that they should grow into the ' great multitude which no man could number.' The sublime pictures of

the heavenly worship have revealed the majesty of the divine purpose and the potency of the divine resource. As the ascription of blessing and honour and glory and dominion rises from every portion of the universe to Him that sitteth upon the throne and to the Lamb for ever and ever, the victory of good is triumphantly assured. Again and again as the tremendous struggle with evil advances to its destined end, the voices of praise are heard on high around the eternal throne. The Apocalyptic hope, born out of national suffering and danger, is expanded to embrace all time and all existence. Using all the figures of tradition, and applying them to the circumstances of his day, the Seer of Patmos gave the most concrete shape to the deepest yearnings of human nature and the perpetual tragedy of our experience. We cannot of ourselves reduce the confusion around us to harmony, but harmony is our profoundest need. Only in a realm above the strife of change can we find peace. And only in the knowledge that peace is there to be found can we have steadfastness to endure trial, fight the good fight, and keep the faith. Over the vision of the Ephesian John, once known yet early forgotten, so that later generations could only guess who he might have been, we may inscribe the verse of our own poet, Henry Vaughan :

> ' I saw Eternity the other night,
> Like a great Ring of pure and endless light,
> All calm as it was bright.
> And round beneath it Time, in hours, days, years,
> Driven by the spheres,
> Like a vast shadow moved, in which the world
> And all her train were hurled.'

LECTURE II

THE LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES

The literary form of the Apocalypse is that of a letter addressed to 'the Seven Churches which are in Asia,' introduced editorially as a prophecy communicated by the Angel of Jesus to his servant John. The churches enumerated are those of Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea.

The Roman province of Asia included the greater part of Western Asia Minor. It had been under the government of Rome for more than two hundred years, since Attalus III. of Pergamum bequeathed his kingdom to the Republic in 133 B.C. The province under its new administrators became the wealthiest in the Empire. Great roads brought the products of the East to the Mediterranean, and the cities both on the coast and in the interior were numerous and wealthy. In spite of the dangers of travel which the Apostle Paul so pathetically enumerates, it could be recorded on the tomb of a Phrygian merchant far distant from the sea that he had voyaged seventy-two times to Rome.[1] Not commerce only thus passed to the West. The influences of oriental culture had blended for centuries with Hellenic thought, and the religions, mythologies, and astral science of Babylonia, Persia and Syria, made themselves known to the Greek-speaking world. As far back as 280 B.C. Berosus, a priest of Bel, had established himself in the island of Cos. Sumptuous buildings expressed civic pride, and splendid religious ceremonies ministered to the pageantry of daily life.

[1] Harnack, *Expansion of Christianity* (tr. Moffatt), i. p. 20[2].

Thither to Ephesus came the Apostle Paul from Corinth. Within a year or two, in writing to the saints whom he had left, about 53 A.D., he could send the salutations of 'the Churches in Asia.' [1]

The effect of his mission was enthusiastically described by the author of Acts (xix. 10), 'so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord.' The Apostle's correspondence shows that churches were gathered in Colossê, Hierapolis, Laodicea, and Troas. How many more were planted we do not know. Only two of those of Pauline foundation are named by John. Others beside those addressed by him had probably been established before the end of the first century, as at Magnesia and Tralles. Of the origins of the congregations at Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, and Philadelphia, nothing is recorded. The number specified is obviously connected with the artificial use of seven throughout the whole book. On what principle the members of the Heptad were chosen for exhortation is not clear. They could hardly have been the only churches within John's knowledge. Students of the Roman administration have pointed out their geographical relation. The messenger to whom the book was entrusted for communication first of all to Ephesus, might travel by the north road to Smyrna and Pergamum. There he would meet another coming up from the south-east, and, turning down it, would pass through Thyatira, Sardis, and Philadelphia, to Laodicea. Sir William Ramsay has elaborated this scheme of road-connexion with the suggestion that the Seven Churches were the centres of seven postal districts in a sort of inner circle round the Province, each Church being itself the head of a small group in which Ephesus stood as representative of the Province, and the Province further served as a representative or epitome of the entire Church. It does not seem necessary to base the representative character on local or wider geographical grounds. The use of the 'perfect number' sufficiently indicates that a part may here be taken for the whole. The Christian

[1] 1 Cor. xvi. 19. For more particulars about Ephesus cp. below, p. 195.

missionaries naturally appealed first to the larger populations of the cities. Whatever might be the survivals of other languages in outlying country districts, the speech of the towns was Greek. To the Greek tongue the prophet John must needs adapt himself. Education, literature, law, like art, were all Greek.

I

The salutation opens with the familiar words so often used by the Apostle Paul, ' Grace and peace,' invoked in benediction from the Deity, and the associated powers of salvation.[1] God is not at first named ; he is described without the designation Father afterwards applied to him, in the sublime attribute of Absolute Being ; the heavenly gifts descending with a daring defiance of grammar which can only be expressed in English as 'from He who is,' the equivalent in the Greek version of the ancient ' I AM ' (Exodus iii. 14). The higher theology, whether Jewish or Greek, had long fixed on the unity of the past, present, and future, as the symbol of the divine nature. The emphatic assertion ' I am he ' (Deut. xxxii. 39) was expanded in Palestinian teaching into ' I am he who is and was and will be.' ' Zeus was, Zeus is, Zeus will be ' ran the famous oracle of the ' doves ' or priestesses at Dodona.[2] In the same terms did the inscription of Isis at the Egyptian Sais, identified by Plutarch with Athena, declare ' I am all that was, and is, and is to be.' [3] Indian wisdom sounds again and again the same note. When Krishna will make himself known to Arjuna it is first of all as ' the Beginning and the Midst and the End ' of all creations and born beings. Only when the higher revelation opens his nature to his worshipper's astonished sight does Arjuna cry, ' I see thee without beginning or

[1] They are three in number : God, the Seven Spirits, and Jesus Christ. On such triads cp. Clemen, *Religionsgeschichtliche Erklärung des N.Ts.* (1924), p. 127.

[2] *Pausanias*, x. 12, 5.

[3] Plut. *De Iside*, ix. Compare the inscription at Eleusis to Æon, the eternal God ' who is and was and shall be,' analysed by Reitzenstein, *Archiv. für Rel. Wiss.* xix. (1918), p. 174.

midst or end.'[1] More than a thousand years later Nānak, the founder of the community of the Sikhs, in his first solemn hour of communion with the Deity in the forest, realises the same truth :

'There is but one God, whose name is True, the Creator,
The True One is, was, and the True One also shall be.'[2]

Plato had wrestled with the problem long before. 'Past and future,' he argued in the Timæus, 'are created species of time which we unconsciously but wrongly transfer to the Eternal Essence, for we say that "He is, He will be," but the truth is that "is" alone is properly attributed to him.'[3] This mode of thought passed through Philo and the Fourth Gospel into Christian theology. John of Patmos is no metaphysician. He conceives existence in terms of time, but his emphasis on the continuous being of God is one of the impressive notes of his prophecy. All through the tremendous dooms which shake the world, the song of creation is heard unceasingly on high. The Cæsars may follow one another to a seventh or an eighth (xvii. 10, 11) in swift succession ; the insolent claimants to divine honours pass away and are seen no more ; the forces of the ancient Dragon are gathered for the great assault in vain ; the throne on which God sits abides unmoved. The Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, reigns undisturbed. One word, however, differentiates the Christian from the Greek presentation of the future. Whereas Hellenic imagination was content to express the everlasting duration of the Godhead —*hoc est, hoc fuit, hoc semper erit*, as Apuleius said of Asklepios—John substitutes the prophetic word 'which cometh' or 'is to come.' It implies more than his simple being, it foretells his active self-manifestation, his entry into the human scene, the triumphant manifestation of his sovereignty, the vindication of his righteous rule.

Before his throne are the 'Seven Spirits of God,' joint

[1] *Bhagavad-Gītā*, x. 20, 32 ; xi. 16, 19.
[2] Macauliffe, *Religion of the Sikhs*, i. p. 35.
[3] *Timæus*, 37D, tr. Jowett, iii. p. 456.

sources with the Deity of 'grace and truth.' They are portrayed afterwards as seven torches,[1] and Christ is said to hold them with the seven stars (iii. 1 ; cp. ii. 1). What are these seven spirits ? They are named again as the seven eyes of the Lamb (v. 6), 'sent forth into all the earth,' an echo of the language of Zechariah, who beheld a wondrous golden lampstand with seven lamps which are designated 'the eyes of Yahweh which run to and fro through the whole earth' (Zech. iv. 10). How are such symbols to be interpreted ? The modes of apocalyptic thought are indeed hard to follow. The Seer lives in a world of imagination where analogies are taken for facts, and correspondences of number suggest identity. These 'seven eyes' are the symbols of the divine omniscience. What connexion can they have with the seven lamps of the golden lampstand which was part of the furniture of the Levitical Dwelling (Exod. xxv. 31 ff.) ? It was, according to the historian Josephus, contemporary with John the Prophet, an emblem of the structure of the universe, representing the sacred Seven : the sun, moon, and five planets.[2] The heavenly bodies were believed to be animated by spirits ; in the ancient Persian theology these became the Seven Immortal Holy Ones, and in later Judaism the Seven Holy Angels (Tobit xii. 15). Daniel and Enoch call them 'the Watchers' ; for John they are the Seven Angels of the Presence.[3] Most modern scholars identify the Seven Spirits of God with these Angels. Dr. Charles, in accepting this interpretation, finds this 'grotesque Trinity' altogether unsuitable, and proposes to eliminate the second term altogether, adding as a further reason that its presence disturbs the rhythm of the verse.[4] There is, however, another possible line of

[1] iv. 5 ; for the word compare Ezek. i. 13.

[2] *Antiquities*, iii. 7, 7. This interpretation was current in the Church at the end of the second century ; Clem. Alex. *Strom.* v. 6, § 34.

[3] Dan. iv. 17 ; Enoch xx. 1 ; Rev. viii. 2. The conception of the seven planets as under the control of archangels lived on in the Jewish mystery-lore known as Kabbālāh ; they governed the world on successive days of the week, Raphael the sun, etc., Jeremias, *The Old Test. in the Light of the Ancient East*, i. p. 43².

[4] *Comm.* i. 9. It may be argued further that if the clause is withdrawn, it leaves the salutation parallel to the regular Pauline form ;

explanation. It must be noted that the Spirits are expressly called Spirits of God. The angels are not thus connected with Deity. On the other hand, Jewish theology had been drawn into the sphere of the sacred number, and reckoned the Spirit of the Lord as sevenfold.[1] The seven Spirits are thus the equivalent of what was otherwise known as 'the Spirit.' But the Spirit was especially associated with the Church. There was the scene of its manifold activity, and the Church itself had a heavenly counterpart on high (Hebr. xii. 22). There were the Christians chosen in Christ before the world's foundation; there was hidden the mystery of God's eternal purpose. By and by it was affirmed that the Church had existed from the beginning. It had been called into being before the world was made.[2] As head of the Church Christ was in the closest relation with the Spirit, with which he was identified as Lord by the Apostle Paul (2 Cor. iii. 17, 18). It thus becomes intelligible how Christ can hold both the seven spirits and the seven stars together. They represent different aspects of the same divine reality,[3] while the Seven Spirits can be a co-ordinate source of grace and truth with God and Christ.

Third of the sacred Three is Jesus Christ, himself presented in three characters. He is, first, 'the faithful witness,' an aspect in which he is also viewed in the Fourth Gospel, where he declares that the object of his entry into human life was to bear witness to the truth (xviii. 37). It was a function that could also be realised by a disciple, such as Antipas of Pergamum, who is

and it may also be noted that the reference to the position of the Spirits is premature, for nothing has yet been said about God's throne. Dr. Charles attributes the insertion to a second century scribe.

[1] Founded on the sixfold division of Isaiah xi. 2. The Greek translators added 'the spirit of piety.' Cp. the sevenfold spirit of virtues, Enoch lxi. 11.

[2] See the passages quoted in the author's *Phases of Early Christianity*, p. 147 f. Cp. below, Lect. IV. p. 125.

[3] In this suggestion I have ventured to go a little further than Dr. Swete, who simply says 'here the "spirits" are seven, because the Churches in which they operate are seven.' The subsequent description of them as the eyes of the Lamb 'sent forth into all the earth' seems to imply something more transcendent and universal.

described in the same terms (ii. 13), though it is also of the widest application.[1] He is, secondly, as for Paul, the first-born from the dead (Col. i. 18); and, thirdly, the ruler of all earthly kings, like the Davidic prince whom the Psalmist looked for, the ideal sovereign, whom God will make his first-born, higher than the kings of the earth (lxxxix. 27). At this point prophetic devotion breaks into an enthusiastic ascription of eternal glory and dominion to him founded on the thought of his relation to believers, his present love, and his wondrous act of self-sacrifice. Had he not thereby loosed them from their sins by his blood? It was an ancient belief embodied in the ritual of Israel, as in others, that blood possessed a purifying and cleansing power. Sin created a bond of evil from which the sinner must be freed; it left a stain which must be wiped out. This combination of ideas begot the alternative reading washed.[2] In the tragic stories of Orestes and Œdipus Greek poets had illustrated the dreadful necessity that blood-guilt could only be 'loosed' by blood.[3] In the age of John a strange and hideous rite was probably already practised in Asia Minor, of which the earliest known instance is attested at Rome in 134 A.D., known as the Taurobolium. The worshipper, wearing a golden crown, was drenched with the blood of a slaughtered bull, and emerged from the horrible bath purified from all sin, *renatus in eternum*, 'reborn for ever.'[4] For the disciple of Jesus deliverance from sin secured him the privilege which Moses was believed to have announced to Israel, summed up in the two terms 'a kingdom, priests' (Exod. xix. 6). Of this

[1] The frequent comparison of the moon in the commentaries on the ground of Ps. lxxxix. 37 is rendered uncertain by the doubtful character of the Hebrew text, though the clear reference which immediately follows renders it suggestive.

[2] The Greek verbs differ only in one letter, *lu*-o and *lou*-o. Their connexion is illustrated when Plato calls Apollo the Washer and the Looser, *Cratylus*, 405B.

[3] Aesch. *Choeph.* 790 (803) f.; Soph. *Oed. Tyr.* 100. For a similar expression with 'washing away,' cp. Eurip. *Iph. Taur.* 1197 (1224).

[4] Among recent descriptions of the *Taurobolium*, cp. Cumont, *Oriental Religions*, p. 66; Frazer, *Golden Bough*, iv. (Adonis. i), p. 274. Numerous instances are quoted by Toutain, *Les Cultes Paiens dans l'Empire Romain*, ii. (1911), p. 85.

promise, Christians, as the true Israel, became the heirs. Visions of regal dignity floated before their eyes. They, too, said the Apostle Paul, should reign with Christ; through the gift of the Spirit they had immediate access to God, and could present their bodies to God a living sacrifice in reasonable service; they, too, would share the heavenly sovereignty and judge (*i.e.* rule) angels.[1] Well might the prophet in the glow of such hope call on his readers to offer to their Deliverer glory and dominion for ever and ever.

The doxology closes the salutation, and it is time for the letter to begin. But the triumphant confidence which pervades the whole book bursts forth in a proclamation of the great event to which it leads up, 'Behold, he cometh with the clouds,' as Daniel had seen the mysterious advent of 'one like unto a son of man' (vii. 13). He will thus be made visible to all mankind, and the authors of his death are specially included among the spectators.[2] His advent will beget universal lamentation, whether in dread of the possibilities of approaching doom, or in penitent sorrow for his suffering, is not clear. As in his heavenly form he still bears the marks of having been slain (v. 6), this passage may have suggested the later expectation that Christ would appear on or with the cross, showing the wounds pierced in hands and feet and side, an object of remorseful pity and adoring compassion. The prophecy is reinforced by a fresh emphasis on the divine eternity, 'I am the Alpha and the Omega.' The first and last letters of the Greek alphabet might be regarded as comprising all between. In the Hellenic mysticism of letters the seven vowels from Alpha to Omega formed a peculiar name for God; and the whole alphabet of twenty-four expressed the totality of the world, including within the materials of language and thought the sum of divine and demonic powers.[3] Jewish

[1] 1 Cor. iv. 8; 2 Tim. ii. 12; Rom. xii. 1; 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3.

[2] With reference to Zech. xii. 10, a quotation also employed in the Fourth Gospel (xix. 37; cp. Matt. xxiv. 30), though with a different application.

[3] Boll, *Aus der Offenbarung Johannis* (1914), p. 26 f.

teachers used a similar figure when they said that Adam transgressed the whole law from Aleph to Tau, and even identified the two letters together (*eth*) with the divine Shechinah.[1]

The prophet now introduces himself, 'I John,' like 'I Daniel,' or 'I Esdras.' He shares with the brethren the tribulation which precedes the Messiah's advent, the hope of the kingdom which it will inaugurate, and the patience with which it must be borne in Jesus, the personal name used henceforward to denote the fellowship of the disciples. He was in Patmos, the modern Patino, one of the small group known as the Sporades, some forty miles from the mainland. The reason for his presence there is obscure. It was, he says, 'for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.' Had he secluded himself there that he might receive the revelation? It is not clear why a migration to a scantily inhabited island should be necessary. Or had he gone thither to preach the word and bear his witness? Were there no cities as yet unvisited which would have offered him a larger scope? The remoteness and the insignificance of the population renders such an explanation extremely improbable. The two terms recur twice over (vi. 9, xx. 4) as the grounds of martyrdom, and their mention here plainly suggests that whether or not Sir William Ramsay is correct in depicting him as condemned to the cruelties of a convict settlement, John presents himself as banished by Roman authority for his Christian faith. Irenæus, curiously enough, is silent, but from the end of the second century the tradition is definite. It is not clear, however, whether it had any other source than this very passage.

Rapt into ecstasy on the Lord's day,[2] the prophet hears

[1] Schoettgen, *Hor. Hebr.* on Rev. i. 8. The passage there cited occurs in Ezek. ii. 2. The lack of distinct connexion with what precedes has exposed these two verses to the suspicion of being later additions. Dr. Oman (*Book of Rev.*, 1923) eliminates the whole of vv. 1-8, and supposes the book to have begun at ver. 9.

[2] Doubtless the first day of the week, as in the little manual of Church practice known as the *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, xiv. The suggestion that the prophet was projected into the coming 'Day of the Lord' is not probable.

a mighty voice in trumpet tones bidding him write what he sees and send the book to the seven churches whose names are now specified. They belonged, as we have already learned, to proconsular Asia, and they were all *conventus juridici*, seats of judicial administration. Thus instructed he turned to look at the speaker, ' to see the voice.' He beheld seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of them stood the august figure of one in Daniel's language ' like unto a son of man.' He is ' like,' but such likeness implies also a difference ; he is human in form, but he transcends humanity. His vesture is ' girt about the breasts with a golden girdle like the angels ' (xv. 6). Still higher character is hinted by the white hair resembling that of the Ancient of Days (Dan. vii. 9), white as wool or snow, symbol in the Most High of his incalculable age.[1] The rest of the description—the flaming eyes, the feet like burnished brass—is borrowed from another Daniel figure (x. 6), though the voice is identified not with the roar of a crowd but with the noble phrase of Ezekiel, ' the sound of many waters ' (i. 24, xliii. 2), not broken or turbulent, but in majestic harmony. In his right hand he held seven stars ; and out of his mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword, like that which the Psalmist desired for the saints with which to execute vengeance on their enemies (cxlix. 6). It was no instrument of cutting speech (Isai. xlix. 2), it was the deadly weapon with which he would smite the Nicolaitans (ii. 16) and as King of Kings would afterwards ride out to war (xix. 15). Like the righteous in the kingdom of the Father (Matt. xiii. 43), or the angel who descends from heaven with a rainbow on his head (x. 1), his countenance shone like the sun in his strength (Judges v. 31). Before such a tremendous personality the prophet fell senseless on the ground. The hand that held the stars was laid upon him in encouragement, and the solemn voice declared in the language of ancient prophecy, ' I am the First and the Last ' (Isai. xliv. 6). Yet though eternal (cp. xxii. 13) he had once submitted to become a corpse, but now he is emphatically the Living One, and holds the keys of

[1] Cp. the Son of Man in Enoch, *ante*, p. 19 f.

Death and Hades, grim comrades of the underworld (vi. 8, xx. 13).[1]

In the right hand of Christ were seven stars. What happened to them when he laid it upon the prophet's prostrate form we are not told. The writer is clearly not relating something that he has seen. The august figure is an imaginative creation, largely built up on Old Testament suggestions, in no sense the actual object of a vision. It expresses in the most concrete possible shape the author's conviction that he addresses the Churches under an immediate divine sanction. The judgments which he is about to pass, the rewards which he will promise, the tribulations which he will announce, are given to him to declare. In a threefold injunction he is bidden to write what he has just seen, to set forth the condition of the Churches, and to delineate the great struggle which will overthrow for ever the enemies of God. The mystery of the seven stars and the seven golden lampstands is the first of three secrets (cp. xiii. 18, xvii. 7, 9) which the prophecy will explain. The seven lampstands typify the seven Churches, and the stars are their angels. The choice of a lampstand to represent a church is, perhaps, a reminiscence of the vision of Zechariah. It is, however, no earthly object. It is a heavenly counterpart, like the Ark and the Temple itself ; and can be removed from its place in the celestial concourse amid which Christ walks. What, then, is the angel of a church ? The angel is, after all, originally only a messenger. Even a modern commentator like Spitta could interpret them as seven delegates sent from the Churches to Patmos, through whom the letters and the book could be despatched to their destination. A widely accepted view among older critics which still has the support of students so eminent (though theologically so far apart) as Zahn and the late Johannes Weiss, identified them with the bishops. But

[1] The possession of the keys is, of course, the symbol of power, cp. Matt. xvi. 19. Jewish theology (Targum of Jonathan on Deut. xviii. 12) placed four keys in the hand of the Lord of all the world, of life, the tombs, of food and rain. Reitzenstein has recently connected this solemn figure with the mysterious *Aion*, the personification of Eternity, cp. *Götting. Gel. Anzeiger* (1921), p. 168.

it is highly doubtful whether such official heads as is implied in what is known as the monarchical episcopate had yet been elevated above the presbyters or elders of the congregation. There is no other instance throughout the whole book in which the term angel is used to designate a church ministry. We come nearer the mark with the suggestion that they personify the community, and embody the collective spirits of the churches. In the development of Jewish angelology, however, they rather resemble the patron powers whom Daniel conceived to preside over the kingdoms of Persia, Greece, and the like, and they have their nearest analogy (as Moulton and Moffatt have pointed out) in the Persian *fravashis*. These included not only the spirits of the dead, but also the ideal counterparts of the living, both individuals and groups, districts and regions. They dwelt in heaven, but mysterious ties united them to their complementary beings on earth. A double symbolism thus combines on high the angel who is in some sense affected by and in turn responsible for the behaviour of the church, and the church itself. The equation of the angels with stars belongs to a world-wide view in many forms that the stars are animated beings.

II

In the form of letters, then, addressed to the angels the characters of the Churches are described, their weaknesses, the dangers threatening them, their excellence, and the rewards of faithfulness. They are conceived on a common type, in which the exalted Christ is the author. The repeated formula of warning, 'He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches,' is the prophet's summons to attention; he is the channel of inspiration through whom the message is communicated. The challenge shows that the Seven Epistles are designed to be read as a whole. They form a general exhortation with particular illustrations; the concrete circumstances, the actual difficulties and perils, are typical of those of the entire Church. The author is evidently a Jewish

Christian, though the Law is never named. The name of Jew is honourable; it is intolerable that it should be taken by pretenders, men who say they are Jews but are not, a veritable Satan's synagogue (ii. 9). In the background are the language and ideas of the Old Testament, but the trials of the Christians have their own terminology. There is, however, a fund of common experience and hope. The prophet can draw upon a traditional vocabulary, and employ terms of promise sanctioned by long usage. The early preachers had gathered a store of symbols of which their successors could make full use, confident that they would be understood without elaborate explanation. Each letter opens with a similar declaration of cognisance of the Church's condition, 'I know,' though different circumstances are singled out for comment. That judgment cannot be questioned; against its censure there is no appeal. The first is addressed naturally to the oldest Church of the province. When the works, the labour, and the patience of the Ephesian Christians are commemorated, we are reminded of the Pauline enumeration to the Thessalonians of their 'work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope'; just as the repeated occurrences of the words 'keep' and 'overcome' supply a point of contact with the vocabulary of the Johannine letters. It need hardly be added that many coincidences of language and style with the rest of the book establish beyond all doubt the identity of authorship which should never have been called in question.

The authority of each letter is established by a fresh presentation of the Messianic speaker, founded for the most part on the preceding vision. His sovereignty over the Churches is indicated by his possession of the seven stars (ii. 1). As 'the first and the last' he shares God's own continuity of being (ii. 17), and in the same way as 'holy and true' (iii. 7) he is the same august character (vi. 10). To the Church at Thyatira he is announced as the Son of God (ii. 18), not, however, in a metaphysical sense, for his eyes 'are like a flame of fire' wherewith to search its members' hearts, but in the figure of the second

Psalm. The victor in life's battle shall be endowed by him with authority over the nations, and 'shepherd' them with a rod of iron,[1] 'as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces' (ii. 27). No less emphatically as the dispenser of power he is the possessor of the Seven Spirits of God as well as the Seven Stars (iii. 1), the Spirit, the Church, and Christ being all mystically connected. Keeper of the keys of Death and Hades, he can naturally also open the door of the kingdom (iii. 7); and he bears the obscure title 'the Amen' (iii. 14), commonly referred to the ancient phrase 'the God of Amen,'[2] which perhaps should be read 'the God of Omen,' faithfulness or truth; and in that character he is 'the faithful and true witness' already named in the opening salutation. Lastly, he is 'the beginning of God's creation.' So was Wisdom created (according to the Greek version, Prov. viii. 22) as the beginning of the Lord's ways; and the Apostle Paul, after designating him 'the first-born of all creation,' gives him the solemn title 'Beginning' (Col. i. 15, 18), absolutely, yet apparently qualified by what follows, 'first born out of the dead,' for it is in that capacity that he is head of the Church. Enoch had already described the Messiah as chosen and hidden before the Lord of Spirits ere the world was created (xlviii. 6, cp. 2, 3). The prophet John was not in touch with Greek philosophy like the Apostle, and the metaphysical significance of *archê* as a principle of causality probably lay outside his view.[3]

Each letter opens with the confident declaration 'I know.' It is the utterance of a judge from whose insight there is no appeal. The Churches are all engaged in a common warfare, and in waging it they are not all equally faithful or effective. Only Smyrna and Philadelphia

[1] It was a favourite quotation (cp. xii. 5; xix. 15) from the Greek version (Ps. ii. 9), which was founded on the same letters as the Hebrew (R.V. 'break') but derived from a different root. The shepherd was a well-known type of rule. Dr. Charles proposes to give to the word the meaning 'devastate' or 'destroy.'

[2] Isaiah lxv. 16.

[3] Compare its use in an inscription concerning the Emperor Augustus cited below, p. 82.

escape blame. In the brevity of the censures and our ignorance of the specific conditions it is not easy to determine the precise application of some of the reproofs. Uncertainty attaches to several details, so that they are open to different interpretations. It is fairly clear that the several communities are not of recent foundation, and their admonisher has known them long. Addressing Ephesus first he can recall in Pauline terms its worth and labour and patience,[1] but it has left its first love and is summoned to repent and resume its former activity. Sardis, once the famous capital of Crœsus many centuries before, had the repute of life, but in reality was dead. Laodicea is sternly denounced for its pride of wealth and religious indifference. There are hints here of tendencies such as affect all new movements. In the first glow of enthusiasm the sacrifices which fidelity to principle requires are embraced with ardour. Under the slow decline of the prospect of success they become irksome, and little by little they are evaded by unworthy compromise. The charities and hospitalities demanded from richer members involved a strain which not all were ready to meet. Social differences were not always overcome by the new sense of brotherhood. When death removed the most earnest and gifted, leadership might fall into less energetic hands. These are the common experiences of every organised effort of the humblest kind. There were others which affected the Christian movement from causes both within and without. The delay of the expected advent of Christ dulled the sense of the immediacy of divine judgment, and the standard of zeal relaxed. It was necessary to rekindle the fervour of expectation. Sardis is warned that if it will not watch it will be caught like a householder slumbering and unconscious when the thief enters in the night.[2] Many unforeseen questions of conduct arose on which diversity of opinion and consequently of action were possible. In the background loomed dim possibilities of conflict with

[1] ii. 2. Cp. 1 Thess. i. 3, 'work of faith, labour of love, patience of hope,' though the applications are somewhat different.

[2] iii. 3. Cp. Matt. xxiv. 43; Luke xii. 39; 1 Thess. v. 2.

the local authorities for public order, and the demands of the representatives of the Emperor.

The missionary enthusiasm of the first believers called many men into the field as preachers, for whose claims and character it became necessary to provide some test. They expected to be received and supported as travelling apostles. They planted themselves on the wealthier communities demanding maintenance, and were often the means of spreading heretical teaching. The nature of the 'evil men' whom the Ephesians had refused to harbour in their midst is obscure. They have been identified with the missionaries from Jerusalem who troubled Paul (2 Cor. xi. 13), or with the Nicolaitans (ii. 6, 15), or those who in the same phrase 'call themselves Jews and they are not' (ii. 9). This charge, levelled at opponents in Smyrna (ii. 9), seems called forth by opposition and taunts from the local community. The relations between the Synagogue and the Church had never been friendly. The Christian preachers who had made their first appeal at the Sabbath-worship sometimes awoke violent hostility; and when the new sect posed as the true Israel and the heirs of the ancient promises, the possessors of the venerable name were not inclined to hear themselves denounced as false. At Smyrna, where the Christians were poor in means though rich in loyalty, they seem to have been a source of frequent annoyance, culminating in an impending persecution. That is viewed throughout the book as the devil's work, and the prophet angrily denounces them as a synagogue of Satan (ii. 9, cp. iii. 9).

Other difficulties arose for the believer in the common intercourse of daily life. The incidents of the home, birth, marriage, death, were all enveloped in idolatrous rites. There were numerous crafts, the sculptor of statues, the silversmith and the gold-beater, the purveyor of incense, all ministering to the temple services. The schoolmaster must teach the fables of the gods. The pleader in the law-courts, the magistrates at the town-hall, carried out their functions under the symbols of the popular faith. The coins in daily circulation were stamped with divine effigies; personal names were constantly

founded upon those of deities ; the theatre and the camp both claimed the sanction of religion. Entry into a church might involve the surrender of many occupations, and bar the way to many civil offices. Practical difficulties soon arose in the common meals celebrated by various kinds of associations, such as trade-guilds, workers in wool or bronze, carpenters, fishermen, burial clubs, and the like. Where did the meat come from ? What character did it bear ? Before it was bought in the market had it been first offered in sacrifice on an altar ? And if so, was it lawful for the Christian to eat it ? The Apostle Paul had been early confronted with these questions. ' Whatsoever is sold in the shambles,' he wrote to the Corinthians (1, x. 25), ' eat, asking no questions for conscience sake.' But if the host at a dinner party warned a believer, ' This hath been offered in sacrifice,' regard for the conscience of others should lead him to decline (cp. 1, viii.). This simple issue became a type of a whole class of questions. How far was it lawful to compromise with common customs founded directly or indirectly on idolatry ? On the one side was the strenuousness of austere principle, on the other the demand for liberty. Each claimed to control both doctrine and conduct. The prophet plants himself firmly on the original teaching which must be kept unsullied to the end, ' Hold fast what you have,' he says in Christ's name, ' till I come ' (ii. 25, iii. 11). Over against this peremptory standard of strictness was the plea for individual judgment and personal independence. Its champions are designated Nicolaitans (ii. 6, 15), apparently as the followers of a leader named Nicolas. Who he was is entirely unknown. Nearly two generations earlier a proselyte of that name from Antioch had been appointed one of seven distributors of church funds at Jerusalem to relieve the Twelve of administrative cares. But the name was not uncommon, and there is no reason for fastening any stigma of heresy or immorality upon him.[1] At Ephesus

[1] Writing in Italy, early in the second century, Hippolytus ascribes to him the view that belief in Christ and the reception of baptism constituted the resurrection, which was thus an inward and spiritual

and Pergamum it was well known what danger the movement involved. It led to perilous compromises with common practice, and condoned the eating of food which had been offered in sacrifice ; and also fornication. Whether this meant actual unchastity, or whether it was only the application of the Old Testament language to describe connivance at Canaanite idolatries, is doubtful. It is described as Balaam-teaching (ii. 14, 15). In later Judaism the ancient soothsayer had become a figure of guile, and the historian Josephus (contemporary with John) told an odious tale of his advice to Balak to send a bevy of beautiful Moabite girls into the camp of Israel.[1] At Thyatira this movement had acquired considerable importance under the inspiration of a prophetess whom the indignant seer designates by another name of traditional reprobation, Jezebel. A strange reading in some manuscripts, preserved in the Latin Vulgate, adds the words ' thy wife.' This has led some critics (as far apart as Zahn and Johannes Weiss) to suppose that the angel to whom the letter was addressed was, after all, the bishop. Other interpreters find it incredible that the congregation should have tolerated an adulterous spouse of their head with her paramours and children without expelling them. They reject the words ' thy wife,' and regard the whole language as symbolical. The evil was not of recent origin. It had not, indeed, prevented the growth of the Church in love and faith and service and patience ; but it was now so grave that severe penalties would await all who shared in it. The obscure phrase launched against the woman herself, ' cast her into a bed ' (ver. 22), seems to threaten some more terrible punishment than disease, and suggests the fate of those who are to ' lie down (in the underworld) in pain ' (Isai. l. 11). The way of repentance is, indeed, still open ; but great

process, and did not concern the flesh. Clement of Alexandria describes him as a chaste husband whose daughters grew old in virginity, and whose son preserved his purity. Those who professed to follow Nicolaus perverted his maxim that the ' flesh must be abused ' (*Strom.* iii. 4, and ii. 20). Cp. Seeberg, *Lehrb. der Dogmengeschichte*, i. (1908), p. 225.

[1] *Antiquities*, IV. vi. 6.

tribulation awaits the persistently unfaithful. It is possible that this movement was really an early type of practice which claimed the right to explore all lines of experience on the ground that to the pure all things were pure. Among the sects included under the general name of Gnostic at a later day there were tendencies to antinomianism which might well have excited alarm on their first appearance among the guardians of a morality with undoubted leanings towards asceticism. In such a situation John might well urge the believers at Ephesus, Pergamum, and Thyatira, to have nothing to do with 'Satan's deeps' (ii. 24).

To those who have realised the glow of brotherly love which undoubtedly pervaded many of the early Christian assemblies, it will always seem strange that the sufferers under Nero should have been described by Tacitus as 'convicted of hatred of the human race.' Estranged from the Jews and debarred from sharing in much of the common life around them, they might well seem unsocial. The care with which they guarded the access to their mysteries begot the accusations which later apologists repelled with such vehemence. Popular cries charged them with lewdness and crime, incest and the hideous cannibalism which followed child-murder. How early such slanders were invented we do not know. But enough suspicions were soon aroused to supply bitter taunts and malicious insults. To bear reviling for Christ's name, to hold it fast in opposition amid shame and jeers and scorn, was the trial of the disciple's endurance, and when disturbances like the silversmith's riot at Ephesus led to their arrest, they were exposed before the magistrate to the supreme test of loyalty to their heavenly Lord: would they offer sacrifice before the statue of the Emperor?

III

When the Gospel was carried out of Palestine into the Greek-speaking world, it encountered an immense variety of religious beliefs. Venerable polytheisms and new semi-universal devotions competed side by side for popular

support. From Egypt and Syria, from Mesopotamia, Persia, Asia Minor, Greece, a multitude of deities found their congenial worshippers. But none of these opposed themselves exclusively to the rest ; none threatened the votaries of other cults with everlasting damnation ; and none had any political significance as an organ or symbol of the State. Among these, therefore, Christianity could make its way at no more risk than that of incurring dislike and suspicion, the hostility bred of deep-rooted ignorance and prejudice. It was otherwise with the homage offered to the Emperor. He represented all the majesty of the Roman world. The power which had knit into one polity of peace the vast community of races, nations, and languages, from the Persian Gulf to the Atlantic, from the cataracts of the Nile to our own Tyne, was lodged in him. Of all that made for law and order, for civilisation, the arts, learning, education, commerce, trade, he was the symbol. To a world weary of war he gave tranquillity.

It was from the East that this cultus first came, not, however, in the shape of personal deification, but in homage to Rome. The first temple was built to the city at Smyrna in 195 B.C., nearly three centuries before the Revelation was written. Games were instituted in honour of the goddess in many cities, and her figure was stamped upon their coins. So lasting seemed her power that she was called ' the Eternal City.' Then came the influence of oriental doctrines of the deity of kings. The successors of Alexander the Great, the Ptolemies in Egypt, the Selucids in Syria, the Attalids in Pergamum, received divine titles, which were gradually extended to generals and magistrates from the West. In the year 45 B.C. a statue was erected at Rome to Julius Cæsar, with an inscription in Greek, ' to the invincible God.' The Senate voted him a temple ; a priesthood was established and games to his honour were arranged. The next year, after his assassination, the title *Divus* was conferred upon him, and he was enrolled among the powers of heaven. When Octavian acquired supreme rule he refused to be called ' divine ' in Rome itself, but in 27 B.C. the epithet

Augustus, hitherto reserved for deities and their belongings, was bestowed upon him. The cult of his Genius was founded. As the name Julius had been already attached to the fifth month, Augustus followed for the sixth.[1]

Meanwhile the province of Asia had already begun the new worship. As early as 29 B.C. temples to the Cæsar and to Rome were dedicated in the seat of the Attalids' power in Pergamum where their own statues were still standing. With what enthusiasm the imperial sovereignty could be celebrated may be seen from the inscriptions discovered by a German archæological expedition in the last decade of the last century among the remains of the ancient cities of Halicarnassus and Priénè, Apameia and Eumeneia. The Julian calendar had just been introduced into Asia, and the birthday of Augustus was to be kept as a general holiday on 23rd September. The year, according to the historian Mommsen, was 11 or 9 B.C. 'The birthday of the God,' it was said, 'is become the beginning of gospels (*i.e.* glad tidings) through him to the world.' He is called 'the Saviour of the whole human race.' He is the *archē* (beginning) of life and the end of sorrow that man was ever born. He has been sent by Providence to put an end to war; and peace prevails on earth and sea. At Philæ on the Nile he was celebrated as 'star of all Greece who has arisen as great Saviour Zeus.' As one Cæsar followed another the members of their families were also enrolled among the *divi* of the sky above. It was reserved for Nero, who was hailed on his accession as 'Saviour of the World,' to pose as a new Apollo, and for Domitian (who ordered the titles 'Lord and God' to be used officially) to claim worship as a son of Minerva. The Providence, the Mercy, even the Eternity, of the Emperor was worshipped. We read without surprise of an altar on the island of Thera, dedicated 'to the Almighty Cæsar, Son of God.'[2]

[1] The year began in March; we still retain the succession of the sacred Roman names, July, August, leading up to the seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth months.

[2] Cp. Moffatt, *Expos. Grk. Test.* v. p. 309 (the source is not named). Cp. J. E. C., *The Historical Jesus and the Theological Christ*, p. 46. For Nero, cp. Deissmann, *Licht vom Osten* [4], p. 311.

Temples to Augustus existed in all the cities addressed by John except the small town of Thyatira. Statues, reliefs, gems, coins bearing the imperial heads—perhaps, like Nero's, crowned with the rays or other symbols of deity—were to be found everywhere. The deputies of the cities constituting the Common Assembly annually elected a presiding officer called the Asiarch, who presided for a year over the ritual and the festivals in honour of the reigning emperor.[1] The office was costly, for its occupant was charged with a great part of the expense, and could only be held by wealthy men. In addition to the provision of the sacrifices and the games the Asiarch sometimes erected public monuments or civic buildings, purchased supplies of corn in scarcity, or bequeathed a legacy for municipal objects. For such dignity there was often keen competition, its holder retaining his title for life. The imperial cult, however, was not limited to these great displays. Through local priesthoods it passed from city to city, and found a home in simple forms in the council-chamber, the law court, the meeting of the trade-guild, or the camp.

In this cultus the Christian could take no part. Neither, indeed, could the Jew. But the Jew was protected by a long series of decrees recognising his religion as ancient and legitimate. To such advantages the Christian could lay no claim. No subtle plea that he belonged to the true Israel would have availed to shield him, even if it could have been understood. He owned another Lord than Cæsar ; he obeyed a higher law above the State. His refusal to join his fellow-townsmen in popular practice rendered him a sort of social outcast, and he became the butt of low abuse which might easily grow into personal violence. Two documents, probably slightly earlier in date than our Apocalypse, indicate the kind of danger to which they were exposed. The unknown author of the homily addressed ' to the Hebrews ' writes from an unknown locality to the brethren of an unknown church, from whom for an unknown reason he

[1] Cp. Acts xix. 31, R.V. margin. Similar officers were found elsewhere, a Bithyniarch in Bithynia, a Galatarch in Galatia.

is temporarily separated (xiii. 19). He reminds them of the 'great conflict of sufferings' which they had already endured in the past (x. 32). Contempt and insults had been heaped upon them; either by mob-violence or by legal process they had been despoiled of property. It is permissible to conjecture that an anti-Christian riot (like an anti-Jewish pogrom or a Ku-Klux Klan attack on Catholics in our time) had brought some of them before the magistrates, and involved them in sentences of imprisonment (x. 34, xiii. 3). The danger was great, for some who had once been 'enlightened' had fallen away, and for apostasy there was no repentance (vi. 4-6). In encouraging them to steadfastness the writer appeals to the splendid examples of heroic constancy both in men and women through the long line of Israel's past, and above all to the endurance of Jesus so far surpassing their own sufferings: 'Ye have not yet resisted unto blood' (xii. 4). The only geographical hint lies in the concluding greeting: 'They of Italy salute you.' From the West we may pass to the East. The First Letter of Peter specifies Christians in the whole of Asia Minor except the south coast. There, also, 'the name of Christ' draws down abuse upon his followers, and all kinds of vague charges of misconduct are flung at them.[1] When Christians are enjoined to submit themselves to government authorities from the emperor to the provincial governors (ii. 14) for Christ's sake, it may be inferred that the writer knew of no imperial orders requiring the general suppression of the new faith. The disciples' trial is sharp as a test by fire. For one of them to suffer as a murderer would be indeed shameful, but to suffer for Christ is to be called to glorify God (iv. 12-16). The contrast suggests that the penalty is the same. Let them follow his example still further, and in giving up their lives like him commit their souls to God as a faithful Creator.[2] But there is no indication that Christian blood had so far been shed in any systematic way. In the scanty contemporary references it is not suggested that Christians were tried for treason or magic. Their way of life roused popular

[1] Cp. ii. 12; iii. 9, 16; iv. 14. [2] iv. 19. Cp. Luke xxiii. 46.

anger against them, and in the collisions which followed they found themselves brought before the magistrates as disturbers of the peace. Bound to maintain order, the provincial governors needed no special law to determine their treatment. When social interests were injured or religious institutions were neglected—when temples were deserted and the purveyors of victims for sacrifice found no purchasers [1]—jealousy and opposition easily brought about collisions, and local fanaticism sought the protection and support of the courts. The populations of the East may possibly have been more excitable than those of Rome ; and when Domitian was laying more emphasis on his own pretensions to deity, his representatives abroad might feel themselves urged to show a little similar zeal.[2]

In the province of Asia, however, John can only cite one case of actual martyrdom. Antipas had given his life at Pergamum (ii. 13). How long before the Church there did not need to be reminded, they had been loyal to the Name, even in presence of Satan's throne, the provincial centre of the hated worship. At Smyrna some will be imprisoned, and there will be a brief time of tribulation (ii. 10). The exhortation ' Be thou faithful unto death ' implies that release from prison may be by the headman's axe. But the visions which follow the Seven Letters imply persecution on a much wider scale. Beneath the heavenly altar the Prophet saw the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God (vi. 9), and they are bidden to rest till the number of their fellow-servants and brethren destined to be killed in like manner should be completed. The white-robed saints who stand in a mighty multitude before the throne out of every nation and language, are martyrs still arriving out of the great tribulation (vii. 14). It was even anticipated that all who would not join in the hated worship of the image of the beast should suffer death (xiii. 15). The great harlot is drunk with the blood of saints and martyrs

[1] As Pliny reported to Trajan from Bithynia some twenty years later.

[2] Cp. E. C. Hardy, *Studies in Roman History* (1906), p. 69 ff. ; Merrill, *Essays in Early Christian History*, chaps. iii. and vi.

(xvii. 6). Rome is judged, for in her was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of all the victims of imperial power throughout the earth (xviii. 24). The contrast between the reserved and moderate tone of the letters, and the impassioned vehemence of the visions, must affect every reader. The Seer yields himself enthusiastically to his imagination as he pictures the conflict between the Christians and the State in terms of the gigantic warfare of the cosmic powers. He conceives it pushed to the utmost verge of destruction that he may nerve the believer to endurance, and heighten the triumph of Heaven. It is truly said that ' in touching the Apocalypse we touch the living soul of Asiatic Christendom.' [1] To how many mourners as they gathered up the bodies of the slain did the voice from heaven whisper with inexpressible peace, ' Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.'

For the coward who shirked the issue and the apostate who lapsed from the faith (xxi. 8) there would be no mercy. Life was a fierce warfare for the Jew no less than the Christian. ' This is the condition of the battle,' said the angel to Ezra, ' which man that is born upon the earth shall fight ; that, if he be overcome, he shall suffer as thou hast said : but if he get the victory, he shall receive the thing that I say.' [2] John stands on the same foundation. To the conquerors in the strife there shall be great rewards.[3] The type of Christian experience presented by the Apostle Paul in which the believer is already mystically risen with Christ and seated with him in the ' heavenlies,' does not appeal to a mind that can only think in concrete pictures. John falls back, accordingly, on the ancient faith of Israel that obedience and loyalty deserve their recompense. None of the Churches, however they may have declined from their first purity, are hopeless. Even Sardis, which is only nominally alive,

[1] Moffatt, *Expos. Grk. Test.* v. p. 314.

[2] 4 Ezra, vii. 127. Cp. *ibid.* 90-99.

[3] The term carried with it a hint of something more than moral conquest. The votary who passed through the trials of a mystery-cult like that of Isis or Mithras, which called him to a warfare for its divine object, was rewarded with a crown. Boll, *op. cit.* 49 [1].

has still a few who do not defile their garments, and poor blind naked Laodicea may still gather the true riches and wear the white robe of the saint. The prizes of steadfastness are expressed in promises which are not always easy to interpret. The victor at Ephesus shall receive fruit from the tree of life in the paradise of God. It stood in the third heaven, and it was an old expectation that the Messiah would open the gates and give of its fruit to the saints.[1] The chaplets won in the great games at Smyrna must fade, but for the athlete who is faithful to death there will be an immortal crown.[2] The believer from Pergamum shall eat of the heavenly manna which will again descend from above,[3] and a wondrous white stone will be given him with a new name inscribed upon it, apparently implying a new being or character after the fashion of initiation into a secret ceremony, or perhaps an amulet for his protection. The saint from Thyatira, purged of false teaching, will be endued with authority like that of the Messiah himself over the nations, and power to rule with a rod of iron (as in Ps. ii.), with the additional gift of the morning star, a riddle which has puzzled all commentators. The conqueror from Sardis shall wear the festal white of triumph and peace, or (perhaps more probably) the shining vesture of the glorious body like that into which Enoch was changed by Michael at the divine command,[4] and Christ will then recognise him before God and the angels.[5] The holder of the word of Christ in Philadelphia shall have the privilege of serving as a pillar in the divine temple,[6] bearing three names, of God, the new Jerusalem, and Christ's own new name, being thus dedicated to God and Christ, and enrolled in the heavenly city. And even Laodicea shall be no

[1] Testaments of the XII. Patriarchs, 'Levi,' xviii. 11.

[2] Cp. *ibid.* 'Benjamin,' iv. 1.

[3] Apoc. Baruch, xxix. 8; cp. vi. 7-10; Exod. xvi. 33 f.; Hebr. ix. 4.

[4] Secrets of Enoch, xxii. 8; cp. Phil. iii. 21.

[5] Matt. x. 32; Luke xii. 8.

[6] Abraham was called by God the pillar of the world, *Midrash* on Exod. iii. 3; and the epithet was applied to R. Johanan ben Zakkai (cp. p. 92); Levy, *Neu-Hebr. Wörterb. s.v.*

longer destitute. Blind and naked as it was, it was still loved. What condescension could be greater than that Christ should stand at the door and knock, ready to enter and sup with the inmates! And what honour for the host could be more distinguished than to be translated from the humble table to the guest's own seat in heaven —'To him that overcometh, I will give to him to sit down with me in my throne, as I also overcame, and sat down with my Father in his throne'

LECTURE III

THE HEAVENLY WORSHIP

THE Seven Letters deal with the conditions of the Churches on earth. In the circumstances of a selected group, whatever be the grounds of the prophet's choice, geographical, administrative, historic, the dangers, the demands, and the rewards of the Christian life are displayed for warning and encouragement. The ecstasy is over. Christ has returned to heaven, and it is through a door suddenly opened in the sky that he issues to the prophet in trumpet tones the solemn summons, 'Come up hither, and I will show thee what must come to pass hereafter.' This divine 'must' is the key-note of all apocalyptic hope. It rests upon twin pillars of faith, the belief in the absolute sovereignty of God, and the conviction of his moral government of the world through his choice of Israel to be his people.

The technical phrase first meets us in the Greek translation of the book of Daniel (ii. 28-29). The older teaching of prophecy and wisdom held up prosperity and peace as the rewards of obedience and loyalty, while the godless and wicked must suffer disaster and destruction. Under the stress of persecution this theory—already rudely shaken during the exile—broke down, and a new age was called for to redress the suffering of the time. On the foundation of the Scriptures thought interpreted the past; on the wings of imagination it soared into the future. The Pharisaic theology dwelt on the conception of a divine purpose of righteousness, and when allied with the corresponding conception of God's power tended to see all

human action in the light of his fore-ordination. Broadly speaking the whole course of the world's history is God's appointment :

'All the nations which are in the earth God hath created as he hath us. He hath foreseen them and us from the beginning of the creation of the earth unto the end of the age, and nothing has been neglected by him even to the least thing, but all things he hath foreseen and caused all to come forth.' [1]

The popular teaching in the middle of the first century B.C. ran in such words as these :

'The salvation of the LORD be upon Israel his servant for ever. And let the sinners be destroyed from before the face of the LORD together : and let the saints of the LORD inherit the promises of the LORD.' [2]

When would this consummation be reached ? There were already records in the world above anticipating each man's destiny. His name and birth were written in the heavenly tables,[3] and so were all his actions, 'for God sees all things, even the thoughts of wicked men, which lie in the storeplaces of the heart.' [4] When this was generalised to embrace the whole human race, it led to the view that when the Most High made the world, he first prepared the judgment and all things pertaining to it,[5] Paradise and Gehenna (as the Rabbis taught). Almost in Stoic fashion the Preacher had laid down that there was a time for every matter under heaven,[6] and this conception became at once significant in seasons of danger and distress. 'Let not your spirit be troubled on account of the times,' said Enoch, 'for the Holy and Great One has appointed days for all things' (xcii. 2). 'Thou wilt establish us in the time of thy succouring,' said the Psalmist in Solomon's name, and this was already fixed in the divine appointment ; 'Raise up their king, the

[1] *Assump. Mos.*, tr. Charles, xii. 4.

[2] Psalms of Sol. (tr. Ryle and James) xii. 7, 8. Cp. Gal. iii. 29 ; Hebr. vi. 12, xi. 13.

[3] Jubilees (tr. Charles) xvi. 3.

[4] 2 Enoch liii. 2, 3 ; Cp. Jubilees xvi. 9. [5] 4 Ezra vii. 70.

[6] Eccles. iii. 1. Josephus noted an analogy between Pharisaic and Stoic doctrine.

Son of David,' he pleaded passionately, 'in the time that thou knowest.'[1] When he came in the person of Jesus, the Church explained his sufferings with the help of the divine 'must'; and the tribulations which were to precede the advent of the Son of Man in glory received the same justification.[2] From the days of Daniel it had been believed that there was a time fixed for the End; the hour and the time and the day of judgment were already determined.[3] The long-suffering of God would not anticipate it. The impatience of Ezra, or the souls of the righteous in the chambers of the dead demanding to know how long they were to remain there, is rebuked by the impressive statement of the absolute character of God's ordering in the world:

> 'For he has weighed the age in the balance,
> And with measure has measured the times,
> And by number has numbered the seasons;
> Neither will he move nor stir things,
> Till the measure appointed be fulfilled.'[4]

To John, then, as the events of the future are disclosed, they are all presented under the supreme sanction of the moral order imposed on the whole sphere of creation. Time, space, and all conscious existence, are alike subject to its rule.

I

The sky, it must be remembered, was conceived as a solid firmament, supporting the waters of the upper world, and forming the floor of the heavens. The only access was by some opening through which celestial powers might descend like the Spirit upon Levi or Jesus,[5] or consecrated persons might enter. So Levi, at an angel's bidding, had been permitted to go in. Thither Enoch was lifted by the winds and sped by the course of the stars

[1] Pss. Sol. vii. 9; xvii. 23; cp. xviii. 6.

[2] Mark viii. 31 and parallels; Luke xiii. 33; Mark xiii. 7, cp. 10.

[3] Dan. xi. 27; xii. 4; Rest of Esther x. 11.

[4] 4 Ezra iv. 36, 37 (Box).

[5] Test. XII. Patr., 'Levi,' xviii. 6, 7; Mark i. 10, 11.

and the lightnings.[1] Such visits were not the privilege of the ancients only. Four rabbis, disciples of Johanan ben Zakkai (himself, like the Apostle Paul, a disciple of the famous Gamaliel), and thus contemporaries of John, were reputed to have been similarly borne on high. The solemn adventure was not without peril, for who could see the divine Glory in light unapproachable and live? Akiba alone survived. The angels of service would have thrust him away, but the Holy One bade them admit him. He had ascended in peace, and in peace he returned to earth.[2] John is thus received 'in spirit' into the Presence above, and the world-drama of the future is played out before him.

It opens with two solemn scenes depicting the heavenly worship. Through all the terrors and catastrophes which follow, the homage of creation and the hymns of the angelic choirs maintain the adoration of eternity. Above the strangest incongruities and the direst sufferings the song of wonder, awe, and praise, is heard unceasingly.[3] In the 'cathedral of immensity' to which the prophet is thus introduced, he beholds a throne and One seated on it. So Isaiah had seen Yahweh upon a throne in the Temple with the seraphim above him. So Enoch had seen a lofty throne in a wondrous house whose floor and walls were of fire, where the Great Glory sat beneath lightnings and the path of the stars.[4] There is nothing in John's vision to suggest an enclosure of any kind. When Daniel saw thrones set, they were in the open sky, where they could be reached by one 'like unto a son of man' borne on the clouds. True in later scenes 'the temple of God that is in heaven' was opened, the ark of the covenant was revealed (xi. 19, xv. 5), and from the throne within (xvi. 17) a 'great voice' could be heard. But the description of the throne and the vast throng of angelic wor-

[1] *Ib.* Levi, i. 6, 7; Enoch xiv. 8. Cp. xxxix. 3.

[2] *Babyl. Talmud, Chagigah,* 15a, tr. Wünsche, i. 288.

[3] Dr. Oman proposes to transfer these scenes (iv. v.) to follow the Millennial Rule in xx. Some reasons for dissenting from this arrangement will be found in a Note to Lect. VI. p. 186.

[4] Enoch xiv. 15 ff.

shippers (v. 11) is not adapted to a sacred house. It follows in large measure the mysterious account of the divine Presence vouchsafed to Ezekiel when the heavens were opened.[1] Out of the north came a stormy wind carrying a great cloud where fire flashed continually. Forth from its midst came four 'living creatures' (afterwards called Cherubs), who sustain 'the likeness of a firmament' stretched above their heads. Above the firmament was the likeness of a throne; and on the likeness of the throne was the likeness of the appearance of a man. This wondrous group moved with the aid of four wheels, which gained for it in later Jewish theology the name of 'the Chariot.' Its symbols were understood to portray divine attributes of cosmic significance. The wheels which bore the cherubs and the firmament in any direction typified God's omnipresence, their rings of eyes his omniscience. With the speculations founded on these emblems the school of Johanan ben Zakkai was much occupied, as their teacher guided them into the paths of mysticism. John deals not with appearances, but with reality as he conceives it. The firmament is the actual vault of the sky, and on its strong support God sits enthroned. Had not the prophet of old declared, 'Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne'?[2]

The prophet makes no attempt to describe the person of the Enthroned. As his right hand bore a seven-sealed

[1] Ezek. i. The text is, unfortunately, sometimes corrupt, and the meaning obscure.

[2] The subsequent description is inconsistent with the idea of a closed building where the Deity dwelt in the Holy of Holies. Dr. Charles recognises this, but contents himself with the observation that 'our author may have been quite unconscious of these inconsistent elements' (i. 12). In the combination of visions founded on different sources, and probably written at different times, such incongruities would be more easily overlooked. Jewish cosmography placed the heavenly temple in the fourth heaven in the series of seven. John, apparently, dealt only with one. In the view suggested above I have followed Boll's illuminating book, *Aus der Offenbarung Johannis* (1914), p. 31 f. The interpretation is reinforced by that of the four 'living creatures,' and goes back to Gunkel's striking essay, 'Zum religionsgeschichtlichen Verständnis des N.Ts.,' in the series of *Forschungen zur Relig. und Liter. des A. and N.Ts.* i. (1903), p. 46. Babylonian art represented the sun-god enthroned. Boll quotes various Hellenistic illustrations of deities throned in heaven, *e.g.* Zeus as sovereign in the Zodiac, frequent on coins.

book, he was at least conceived (to use Ezekiel's phrase) in the likeness of the appearance of a man. When Enoch saw the crystal throne with wheels like the shining sun, and a vision of cherubim, he was conscious only of the Great Glory whose robe was brighter than the sun, and whiter than any snow. With a hint of oriental splendour John compares the radiance of his aspect to flashing jewels. The term jasper is not well chosen as a rendering of the Greek *iaspis*, as it is a kind of opaque reddish-brown quartz. The name may be traced back to the Assyrian *yashpu*, which was a transparent or glittering stone like the diamond or opal; the sardis was probably the deep-hued cornelian. Light was, as the Psalmist had sung, the vesture of God; as the opposite of darkness, falsehood, evil, and sin, it was the emblem of all truth and purity and good. When Plato would describe the world above, he named its stones as sardia and jaspids and emeralds.[1] The halo round the throne, in shape like a rainbow, was of emerald hue. It was the common belief (as Pliny noted) that when the eyes were blinded by any other sight, the hue of the emeralds restored them again. Did this guard the angel throngs from being blinded by excess of light? [2]

Forth from the throne proceed lightnings and voices and thunders. Ever since the scene at Sinai (Exod. xix. 16) these had been associated with the divine Presence; they mark successive incidents in the development of the great drama (viii. 5; xi. 19; xvi. 18). In front of the throne are seven burning lamps, their flames symbolising the Seven Spirits of God. Modern interpretations have identified them (as we have seen, p. 66) with the seven great angels 'which stand before God' (viii. 2). Along the line of prophetic theology, however, they may be regarded as a seven-fold manifestation of the divine energy. A hundred years after John wrote, the learned Clement of Alexandria at the end of the second century,

[1] *Phaedo*, 110 E, Jowett, ii. 258.

[2] Dr. Moffatt quotes from a hymn to the Egyptian sun-god Ra, 'Thou hast made heaven and earth bright with thy rays of pure emerald light.'

in view of their equation with the seven eyes of the Lamb (v. 6), quotes the traditional explanation that 'they are the seven spirits resting on the rod that springs from the root of Jesse.'[1] It may be observed that they take no part in the heavenly worship, when they might have been expected to lead the celestial song; neither have they any share in the subsequent catastrophes. Fire, it is true, was the refined essence of angelic beings; but from the days of the burning bush flame was also the manifestation of the mystery of Deity.[2] Beyond the seven 'torches'[3] stretched a 'glassy sea.' The waters above the firmament (Gen. i. 7) were spread in the first heaven, where Levi saw them on his entry, and the angels who placed Enoch there showed it to him.[4] They were clear as crystal. It is the image of brightness, smoothness, and unruffled peace, in contrast with the earthly sea of tumult and confusion which must be done away in the last day, when it has given up its dead.

Round about the throne were four 'Living Creatures,' plainly connected with those of Ezekiel's vision, subsequently designated Cherubim.[5] The secret of the number four was not understood in the early Church. Irenæus fancifully connected it with other fours, four zones of the world, four winds, four covenants given to the human race, and four Gospels. These last found their prophetic counterparts in the faces of the Cherubim, the lion being assigned to John, the calf to Luke (on the ground of the fatted calf), the man to Matthew, and the eagle to Mark. Later writers proposed other attributions, and that of Jerome and Gregory, familiar to us in sacred

[1] Isai. xi. 1, 2; Clem. Alex. *Strom.* v. 6, § 35.

[2] So Dante, in the heart of Paradise, xxxiii. 90. The clauses in iv. 5 and v. 6 are in both cases regarded by many moderns as editorial explanations. But even if they are, that is no reason why they should not represent the original writer's intentions.

[3] Cp. Ezek. i. 13, Greek.

[4] Test. XII. Patr., 'Levi,' ii. 7; 2 Enoch, iii. 3. The waters above the firmament were a heavenly counterpart to those below. There were curious speculations about their respective genders. See Enoch liv. 8, with Charles's note.

[5] Ezek. x. 1. Dr. Charles has brought his usual wealth of learning to the analysis of the origin and later history of these forms.

art, finally prevailed.[1] Modern commentators, emphasizing the majesty of the lion, the strength of the ox, the reason of the man, and the speed of the eagle, have expounded them as the symbols of the powers of Nature working in harmony beneath the divine rule. But Irenæus with his four zones and four winds hit upon a fruitful analogy. The astral theology of Babylon recognised four quarters of the sky, and with this figure were connected four seasons and four winds. Each of the four quarters of the sun's path was again divided into three, and adjacent constellations were selected and named as the signs of the Zodiac. Early in this century the distinguished German Assyriologist Zimmern showed that the Cherubs of Ezekiel corresponded to four of these constellations in the first, fourth, seventh and tenth of these divisions. The order enumerated in Ezekiel, Man, Lion, Ox, Eagle (or storm-bird, the Greek Pegasus), matched the Babylonian, the Man being identified with the Scorpion-Man of the astronomers of the East.[2] The support of the firmament by the Cherubs implied that the spirits animating the constellations were upholding the world above them ; the eyes in the wheels, transferred by John to the Cherubs themselves, indicated their connexion with the stars. How far the prophet, in adapting the strange forms of his predecessor among the exiles beside the river Chebar, apprehended or appropriated their astral significance, we cannot tell. He endows them with six wings like the Seraphim of Isaiah's vision, instead of four ; and they lead the ceaseless song which Enoch, too, had heard (xxxix. 12), ' Holy, holy, holy,' with sublime emphasis on God's omnipotence and eternity.

Associated with them in their homage to the Almighty round the throne are Twenty-four Elders. Like other

[1] Irenæus, *Against Heresies*, iii. 8. Cp. Bishop Wordsworth, *Gospels*, pp. xli-xliii.

[2] On these identifications see the third edition of Schrader's *Keilinschriften und das A. T.* (1903), edited by Zimmern and Winckler, p. 633 ; Boll, as before, p. 36 f. The technical explanation given by Boll of the position of the Cherubs ' in the midst of the throne ' as well as around it, rejected from the text by Dr. Charles on account of its difficulty, need not be reproduced here.

heavenly beings they are robed in white ; they wear crowns of gold, and they sit on thrones as though in judgment or rule. So (at a later day) did the Persian traveller in heaven and hell, Arda Virāf, behold the saints in the highest sphere, the ' Home of Song,' robed and crowned on golden thrones around Ahura Mazda, the Lord All-knowing, engaged in ceaseless worship. Rabbinical theology, expounding the vision of the Ancient of Days in Daniel (vii.), pictured the Deity sitting with his elders like a prince with his senate round him, judging the Gentiles, somewhat as Jesus was believed to have promised his Apostles that in the Regeneration when the Son of Man should sit on the throne of his glory, they also should sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.[1] There was an order of heavenly beings known to Paul by the title ' thrones ' (Col. i. 16), to whom these Elders might bear some resemblance. But why was their number fixed at twenty-four, so that early Christian tradition might arrange them in two semicircles, one on each side, right and left of the throne ? The first guesses were wide of the mark. Following the example of Irenæus in the analogy of the four Cherubs to the four Gospels, Victorinus of Pettau (towards the end of the third century) suggested the twenty-four books of the Old Testament (still the reckoning of the Anglican Articles). More fruitful was his second proposal to treat them as the twelve Patriarchs and the twelve Apostles, combining Judaism and Christianity in a united Church. Another widely-accepted view conceived them to represent the twenty-four courses of the Levitical priesthood, corresponding to the temple, the altar, and the ark. But there is no reason why priests should wear crowns or sit on thrones. The Elders offer homage and not sacrifice. Their dignity is not sacerdotal ; the throne is the symbol of power or honour.[2] In the beginnings of apocalyptic prophecy, when the host of the high ones on high and the corresponding kings of the earth had been punished, Yahweh would reign with his Elders in glory (Isai. xxiv.

[1] Matt. xix. 28 ; cp. Luke xxii. 30.

[2] Cp. Enoch cviii. 12, ' I will seat each on the throne of his honour.'

23). The 'high ones' were the wicked rulers above, associated with the heavenly host of the stars. There were rulers of the order of the stars, and Enoch was shown Elders associated with them.[1] In the heavenly ranks were Dominions and Principalities and Powers, named by the Apostle after the Thrones. But why should these enthroned Elders be reckoned as twenty-four? The question was answered by Gunkel in his famous book on *Creation and Chaos* (1895) on another line. They sit as assessors in a heavenly court. In Daniel's vision of the judgment the Ancient of Days was not alone. 'Thrones were set'; neither their occupants nor their number were named, but they were evidently participators in the great assize. Gunkel pointed to a statement of the Sicilian historian Diodorus, who mentioned twenty-four stars in his account of Babylonian astronomy, twelve to the north and twelve to the south of the Zodiac, called 'Judges of the Universe.' The number and the function passed into the store of apocalyptic emblems, and their astral origin was lost in the mists of time and changing imagery.[2] The Elders are thus a kind of angelic aristocracy (Loisy), but when they join in the worship of the Enthroned they prostrate themselves and cast their crowns before him (as Tiridates threw his diadem, so the commentators remind us, at the foot of Nero's statue). So far there is nothing in the scene specifically Christian. The emphasis of devotion lies in reverence and awe of God's creative majesty, a favourite theme of Christian as of Jewish homage.[3] He who first willed the world in thought so that it 'was,' gave it visible reality in his Works. Nature expressed

[1] 2 Enoch iv. 1.

[2] Cp. Boll, p. 35. Dr. Charles thinks the interpretation 'undoubtedly attractive' (i. p. 131), but prefers to identify them with the angelic representatives of the priestly courses, and adds that 'in their present context the Elders may be the heavenly representatives of the faithful in their twofold aspect as priests and kings.' Dr. Oman reverts to Victorinus, 'twelve tribes and twelve apostles' (p. 165). Babylonists of the thorough-going type find astral significance in those numbers also.

[3] Cp. Acts iv. 24, xiv. 15; Enoch xxxix. 11.

the Everlasting Mind. So should Judgment at last fulfil his Righteous Ways.

Hebrew imagination loved thus to express its apprehension of Deity in concrete pictures; and all higher religious aspiration, using the aids of literature and art, has sought to awaken and sustain the consciousness of relation to the Most High. Plato contemplated the procession of the Gods in the outer heavens when Zeus, the mighty Lord, holding the reins of a winged chariot, led the way, ordering all and taking care of all, and there followed him the array of gods and demi-gods. 'They see many blessed sights in the inner heaven, and there are many ways to and fro, along which the blessed gods are passing, every one doing his own work.' And when they are at the end of their course, they go forth and stand on the outside of heaven, and they behold the things beyond. The vision is open to all; he may follow who will and can, for jealousy has no place in the celestial choir. In that heaven which is above the heavens abides the very being with which true knowledge is concerned. There the soul beholds justice and temperance and knowledge absolute, and gazing upon truth is replenished and made glad.[1] This is the apocalypse of the ideal. The Hindu poet in the great Indian Epic sought to give it more definite shape, as he conceived the abode of Brahmā in the upper heavens.[2] Only the holiest could enter there. It had no fixed form or dimension, like the jewelled city of Indra on its mountain height, or the New Jerusalem. Whoever would try to describe it, saying 'It is like this,' would see it assume a new aspect the next moment. Eternal and undecaying like the Creator who sat within, it needed no sun or moon to lighten it. Self-luminous it shed its radiance everywhere. Around the Grandsire, ancient of days, were his mind-born sons; and there in wondrous personations were Mind itself, Space, Knowledge, Air, Heat, Water, Earth, Nature, Change, and all the other causes of the world. Ascetics and sages, eight branches of the science of Healing, Purpose and Principle in sacrifice, Morality, Utility, and Pleasure (the three aims of

[1] *Phaedrus*, 246 E; Jowett, i. p. 453. [2] *Mahābhārata*, ii. 11.

life), Joy, Self-control, and even Hate, mingled with the throng. There, too, were the sacred Hymns, and Patience, Memory, Wisdom, and Intelligence, the wheels of Time and Virtue, and the several orders of creation, all coming to worship their Maker, with bowed heads, and then going back for their service to the places whence they came. One other figure must not be forgotten, Forgiveness. She, too, belonged to the court of heaven. But she was not the attribute of God, whose sovereign justice, administered under the law of the Deed,[1] might be summed up in the maxim of the Apostle Paul, 'Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.' Hindu theology contained no Redeemer in the early Christian sense. That consciousness of deliverance, of translation out of darkness into light, of rescue from unseen powers of evil into freedom and joy, which thrilled the first believers, had no counterpart in Brahmanism. This it is which exalts the scenes depicting in our Apocalypse the adoration of the Lamb.

II

On the right hand of God, whose human figure is here for the first time definitely indicated, lies a book, not grasped like the roll handed to Ezekiel (ii. 9 f.), but like that roll written both inside and out. It is sealed with seven seals, like the tomb in which Jesus was buried.[2] Numerical coincidence with the seven seals attached to a Roman will has led very eminent critics to see in this figure a legal document, defining the Messianic inheritance.[3] But there is no trace of this idea in what follows. The events on the opening of each seal cannot be viewed in the light of bequests, and the testator is unnamed. The book has rather the aspect of a book of dooms. When all the seals have been opened its contents are never specified. The reader is left to infer that it describes the subsequent course of the world ordained by God till the

[1] The Indian *Karma*.

[2] In the fragment of the Gospel according to Peter, 33.

[3] Cp. Hebr. ix. 15 f.

last Day. It is analogous, then, on a transcendent scale, with the magical books so popular in the East, like those burned at Ephesus in the enthusiasm aroused by the preaching of Paul (Acts xix. 19). Full of mysterious powers, its secrets are dangerous. Special knowledge, sanctity, or authority, alone can release them. No one in the three zones of the universe, not even one of the twenty-four Elders, dares to attempt it. The challenge proclaimed by the strong angel calls forth no champion. The delay prolongs the sufferings of the Christians, and postpones the fulfilment of God's purpose of judgment. The opening involves a tremendous responsibility; it will set the whole process of the last things in motion. Time passes, and at length the weeping Seer is told that Judah's Lion, from David's Root, has conquered, and is empowered to break the seals.

It is, however, no lion which he sees in the midst of the throng around the throne, but a Lamb.[2] Whence it came, how it entered the scene, when and where and over whom its victory was won, the Prophet does not stop to tell. No reader would need such explanations. It was no common lamb, for it has seven horns, apparently a sign of strength, and seven eyes, symbols of the Seven Spirits of God of which Christ was designated the possessor in the letter to Sardis (iii. 1). The seven flames burn no more before the throne (iv. 5); it was the descent of the Spirit into Jesus[3] which constituted him the Christ. The Lamb, though bearing the marks of its own slaughter, stands erect, and now moves forward, and takes the book from the right hand of the Enthroned. It

[1] It has been compared with the tablets in the keeping of the Babylonian God Nebo (Nabu), son of Marduk, on which the destinies of individuals were inscribed (Jastrow, *Religious Belief in Babylonia*, 1911, p. 98), but these seem rather analogous with the 'book of life,' xiii. 8, xx. 12. Loisy's comparison with the tablets given by Tiamat to her consort Kingu, and captured from him by Marduk, is likewise inapt. They were probably concerned with what we should call 'laws of nature.' Cp. Langdon, *Babylonian Epic of Creation* (1923), pp. 91, 93, 99, 120, 122.

[2] The Greek word (used twenty-nine times in Rev., but nowhere else in the N.T.) is not the same as in John i. 36 and Isa. liii. 7 (LXX.).

[3] Mark i. 10, according to the best texts.

is an act of tremendous meaning, and evokes from the four Cherubs and the twenty-four Elders an act of homage similar to that offered to the Eternal. With a new song they prostrate themselves before the Lamb who had bought men out of every tribe and race with his own blood for God.[1] The world-significance of the Messiah's death is already emphasized, in striking contrast with the racial consciousness of some Jewish thanksgivings, 'for thou hast chosen us from amongst all nations and tongues.' The redeemed are described in the terms of the opening doxology (i. 6) as a kingdom of priests, with the additional declaration (R.V.) that they reign upon the earth.[2] The Cherubs and the Elders are encompassed by a vast throng of angels—ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands—who ascribe seven-fold dignity to the Lamb, and again the song of creation rises from the three divisions of the universe (to which the sea is added as a fourth) with one mighty acclamation to God and the Lamb together. The way is thus prepared for the great conflict. Against the meekness and the might of the slaughtered Lamb the power of the Beast, the authority of the Cæsars, the wiles and forces of the Devil, will dash themselves in vain.

Beside this scene let us place an Indian counterpart. Buddhism also had its warfare with evil, not indeed as it appeared embodied in any political organisation, but as it existed in the forms of ignorance, suffering, and sin, through the whole range of conscious existence. And for the encouragement of believers it portrayed a great apocalypse. The Buddha sits on the historic mount, the Vulture's Peak overlooking the Ganges valley, so often the scene of his teaching; but it is the Peak idealised like the new Jerusalem. A vast assembly of Buddhas-to-be and Hearers of all classes, gods and men, surrounds him. Suddenly a ray from his forehead illuminates all the Buddha-fields in every direction, and an immense host of Buddhas appears from all points of the horizon. Thrones

[1] It is not clear to whom the price was paid; cp. xiv. 3.

[2] Many moderns prefer the alternative MS. reading, 'shall reign,' which others regard as a correction. Cp. *ante*, p. 68.

are set, and in dignified array they take their seats upon them in circle after circle like the petals of the mystic rose of Paradise, with their attendants gathered round them. A wondrous shrine has appeared in the sky, and the Lord ascends and opens the door. It contains the person of a Buddha who had entered Nirvana many thousands of myriads of ages before. The two are in fact identical. The hosts around are all the productions of the Lord's own proper body, the manifestations of his ceaseless omnipresent energy. From the infinite past he had submitted to be born, to bear the ills of life and die, in innumerable worlds for incalculable multitudes of sufferers, to heal them of their sicknesses and help them to the victory over sin. The Buddha also bore the title 'Conqueror.' Well might the concourse of Buddhas-to-be which rises out of the ground salute the immortal pair seated side by side in the sky, and raise the hymn of praise. Was not the triumph of righteousness assured? Did not the promise of universal salvation for all beings run 'Ye shall all become Buddhas'? Rapt in contemplation the adoring throng of Hearers remains mute. Fifty æons roll by, and they seem no longer than one afternoon. It is the imaginative impression of eternity.[1]

III

The heavenly worship is continued unceasingly through the scenes that follow. In the most tragic catastrophes its notes of triumph are still heard. Above the cries of distress and the anguish of tribulation rises the eternal song of faith and adoration. Here is one of the sources of the hold which this book still has on the imagination of the believer. The specific forms of the successive series of dooms have, indeed, lost all reality for him. The Roman Empire belongs to the pageantry of the past. The twelve tribes have no longer a symbolic value. But the great conflict of good and evil still constitutes the main stuff of

[1] See the 'Lotus of the Good Law,' *Sacred Books of the East*, xxi. chap. xi. Cp. the author's *Theism in Mediæval India*, p. 78 ff., where the relation of this book to earlier Buddhism is explained.

our activity ; and there is no meaning in it if we cannot through it apprehend the presence and help of a ' Power that makes for righteousness,' abiding eternally above the strife. This is the essence of the apocalyptic presentation. It attempts to apply to the existing scene the principles of everlasting right. Its grounds of judgment are narrow ; it can only use traditional forms ; it is unconscious of its own limitations. But it so pictures the chastisements that light upon the unrepentant, the fall of Rome, the reign of the Saints, the Judgment, the New Heaven and the New Earth, beneath the transcendent majesty of God—

> ' That in these masques and shadows we may see
> Thy sacred way,
> And by those hid ascents climb to that day
> Which breaks from Thee,
> Who art in all things, though invisibly.'

The incidents of tribulation in the several groups of the seven Seals, the seven Trumpets, and the seven Bowls, have little interest for the general reader. They present peculiar literary problems which must be studied in a detailed commentary. Their repetitions, incongruities, and extravagances do not really contribute anything to the main theme. At one stage after another the climax seems to have arrived, the great Day of Wrath has come, the Judgment is accomplished. Yet episode after episode interrupts the sequence, the catastrophe is ignored, and fresh steps must be taken ere the end is reached. No redistribution of material has succeeded in making the tale coherent. The causes of the successive postponements are never explained ; and the kaleidoscopic changes seem to follow each other without any internal connexion. A brief analysis of the events that follow the opening of the successive seals will suffice to indicate their varied background.

It will be observed that the events in the series are by no means coordinate with each other. The summonses to the four mysterious Horsemen are issued successively by the four Cherubs around the throne, and the riders come forth like the armies which follow the leader ' Faith-

ful and True ' (xix. 11) out of heaven. The plagues which they have authority to inflict are destined for the earth, but the vision of the souls beneath the altar when the fifth seal is opened belongs to the realm above, while the tremendous catastrophes following the opening of the sixth affect the heavenly bodies as well as the world below the firmament. Dr. Charles has endeavoured to establish a series of six parallels with the order of the ' birth pains ' set forth in the discourse assigned to Jesus on the Mount of Olives.[1] It may well be that both series rest on a common eschatological tradition, but the Johannine forms have no correspondence with the Gospel language, and the sources of the first four must be sought elsewhere. Their connexion with the four Cherubs suggests that the cognate figures may be traced back to the emblems and agencies of the stars.[2]

Preceding explanations since Gunkel and Bousset opened fresh paths of investigation, have followed what Dr. Charles designates the ' Traditional Historical Method with incidental references to contemporary events.' Modifying an older interpretation which identified the first rider with the Messiah on the white horse, still adopted by Prof. Bernard Weiss, Zahn and Prof. Johannes Weiss found in him the symbol of the victorious progress of the Gospel ; while others saw in his conquering might the advance of the Roman power ; yet others, noting that he carried a bow, detected an allusion to Persian skill, and supposed him to portend an invasion by a Parthian king. The voice at the third seal forbidding injury to the oil and wine found a partial explanation in an edict of Domitian checking the cultivation of the vine, which suited the date (it created so much agitation in Asia that the Emperor had to withdraw it), but left the oil unaccounted for. Such attempts can hardly be said to have been successful, and the way seems free for fresh

[1] Mark xiii. and parallels in Matt. xxiv., Luke xxi.

[2] See the important chapter in Boll's treatise already cited, vi., on the Four Horsemen ; Loisy's *Commentary*, 1923 ; and Prof. Baldensperger's exposition of Boll's results in the Strasburg *Revue d'Hist. et de Philos. Relig.*, Jan. 1924.

enquiry. Only the briefest presentation of Boll's theory, however, can be offered here.

That there is some connexion between the four horses and the white, red, black, and grisled horses in the chariots of Zechariah's vision (vi.) is generally admitted, whether it be direct or indirect. The angel who answered the prophet's enquiry as to their meaning, told him that they were the four winds. This does not, of course, determine in any way the Johannine application. Yet it is not without a possible link of connexion. Recent researches into the Hellenistic literature of astrology have shown how much importance was attached to fixed times and periods, and their control by heavenly powers.[1] Jewish thought was not unaffected by it. One of the Enoch books provided four star-leaders for the four main divisions of the year, and after them twelve leaders of the orders dividing the months.[2] Widely spread both in time and space was a cycle of twelve years, directed in succession by the zodiac signs. The events of the year, its weather and crops, the health or sickness of man and beast, famine and pestilence, even war or peace, all depended on the nature of the zodiacal ruler and the wind blowing at the beginning of the year.[3] Boll, accordingly, sees in the four horses the Zecharian symbols of winds, and their riders are the Star-deities or powers on high. They represent the characters of four successive years. The third horseman carries a balance in his hand; it identifies him with the seventh constellation, Libra, the Balance. With that clue the first is assigned to Leo, the Lion, the fifth; the second to the sixth, Virgo, the Virgin; and the fourth and last to Scorpio, the eighth. It will be noted that the first lion-like Cherub and the first horseman correspond. How far John was using traditional symbols, and was conscious of their zodiacal origin, it is impossible to decide.

[1] The names of the days of our week still betray this origin.

[2] The constellations of the Zodiac, Enoch lxxxii. 11. The Greeks called them Taxiarchs.

[3] The oldest text was written while the Hellenistic kings still reigned in Syria, and the system of such cycles can be traced as far as China and Japan. Boll, p. 80. The twelve-year period was called *Dodekaeteris*.

The riders bring with them various deadly plagues. What significance is there in the bow and crown of the first? To the Lion was ascribed a certain sovereignty over the stars. Upon its breast was a brilliant star known as Regulus, the King-star among the celestials; under its sway mighty kings would contend in battle. It was fitting therefore that the rider should wear the symbol of royalty. Rising with the Lion was the Dog-star, also called the Bowman, which provided the horseman with his bow. But a further curious detail marked the year of the Lion's rule, an 'epiphany of wild beasts.' The functions of the Four are summed up (vi. 8) as authority to kill with sword and famine and pestilence, and by wild beasts. Our interpretations are often so much controlled by the chapter and verse divisions (sometimes so misleading) of our printed texts that these are frequently supposed to be the fourfold powers of Death and Hades. Dr. Charles, following an alternative reading 'to him' instead of 'to them' reduces the verse to 'He that sat upon him was named Pestilence, and there was given to him authority over the fourth part of the earth.' In reality, however, the sword, famine, and pestilence, are the mortal weapons for the second, third, and fourth horsemen. There remain the wild beasts, unaccounted for in the Prophet's scheme. They find their explanation in the 'epiphany of the wild beasts' expected under the Lion, and thus belong to the first rider. The four plagues had been proverbial since the days of Ezekiel (xiv. 12-21), where they are twice named in different orders. Why the wild beasts here close the series instead of leading it we cannot tell.

The red hue of the second horse portends blood, and under the constellation of the Virgin following the Lion there are warnings of lawless assaults, murders, destructions, captures and slaughters, whereby peace is taken from the earth. On the appearance of the Balance-holder a strange voice is heard from the midst of the four Cherubs (still in heaven), 'A chœnix of wheat for a denarius, and three chœnixes of barley for a denarius; and the oil and the wine hurt thou not.' These are famine prices. How

is it that the olive and the vine go unhurt? Under 'Year of the Balance' we read, 'there will be ruin of the fruit of the corn, but plentiful bearing of the fruit of Dionysus (the grapes).' Not only will the vines do well, but if it thunders in the Balance-month (October), while the corn will be destroyed, there will be abundance of wine and *oil*. Here is the item which the reference to Domitian's edict could not include. It is, perhaps, hardly safe to assume that prices were the same at the end of the first century in the eastern Mediterranean as they had been in Rome in Cicero's day;[1] Boll mentions an estimate (on an unnamed basis) which reckons the price of a chœnix of wheat at the eighth of a denarius, so that in time of scarcity it would be multiplied eight-fold, a calculation which may be founded on the same passage as that quoted by Dr. Charles.

The fourth horseman, following the Balance-carrier, represents the eighth sign, the Scorpion. Traditional astrology, for example, in the fragments of the Babylonian Teucros, contemporary with John, placed Hades with its rivers Styx and Acheron and its ferryman, in a quarter of the sky among the 'lower' constellations of the Zodiac among which the sun year after year spent the winter. The Scorpion (in November) dealt out all kinds of poisonous sickness. In a year under its control there would be famine and plagues (*limos* and *loimos*) in the land, and divers diseases would come upon men. Well might Hades, then, be the companion of the deadly Pestilence, just as he is elsewhere of Death (i. 18, xx. 13).[2]

At this point the series of tribulations under starry rule breaks off, and a new theme is introduced. The time-continuity implied in the sequence of the four Horsemen is interrupted. What interval passed before the fifth seal was opened, is not indicated. Beneath the heavenly

[1] Charles, i. 166.

[2] To this brief exposition may be added a reference to the elaborate description of the locusts in the first Woe (ix. 1-12), with human heads, wings, and scorpions' tails, resembling the Centaurs depicted in King's *Babylonian Boundary Stones* (1912). Cp. Boll, p. 69. It is not needful to lay further stress on such foreign elements.

altar[1] the Prophet sees the souls of those who had been slain (like the Lamb, v. 9) for the Gospel and had kept the witness borne by Jesus. They doubtless include the sufferers under Nero, and any others who had perished since. Like the Jewish victims of earlier persecutions, they pray that the judgment which shall avenge them may not be long delayed ;[2] and the answer repeats that of the archangel Jeremiel to the souls of the righteous with a fresh application ; the appointed number of the martyrs must be first completed (vi. 11).[3] The Prophet's vision then leaps forward from his station in heaven to the tremendous events at the opening of the sixth seal in the world below. The order of nature is suddenly shattered. When the sky is rolled up like a scroll the stars are tossed to the ground like the unripe figs of a fig tree shaken by a storm. A gigantic earthquake moves mountains and islands from their places. The seven classes of society appeal to the heaving rocks to fall on them. The Day of Wrath has arrived, and who is able to stand ?[4]

After these terrific catastrophes the opening of the seventh seal is awaited with breathless expectation. Will not the advent of the Wrath inaugurate the Judgment ? The prospect of the future suddenly vanishes. The mountains and islands return to their places. The sky is again unrolled ; the sun and moon resume their regular functions ; the face of nature is undisturbed ; and four angels stand at the four corners of the earth, holding back the winds which they control. From the East (whence

[1] Cp. *ante*, p. 54. On the whole question of the heavenly altars (vi. 9, viii. 3, 5, ix. 13, xiv. 18, xvi. 7) see the admirable lectures of the late Dr. Buchanan Gray on 'The Sacrificial Service in Heaven,' *Sacrifice in the Old Test.* (1925), pp. 148-178.

[2] Enoch xlvii. 1-4. [3] Cp. 4 Ezra iv. 36 ; Baruch xxx. 2.

[4] The whole passage is built with impressive effect on the language of the past. A various reading 'his wrath' (ver. 17) has led many eminent critics to suggest that the clause 'and from the wrath of the Lamb' is an addition. Charles accepts the pronoun 'his,' and Loisy thinks it 'perhaps preferable,' both referring it to the Lamb, the latter on the ground that Christ ought finally to be the great exterminator of the wicked. But elsewhere the wrath is always God's, as in the Old Test., and in the actual judgment scene Christ has no place. When his millennial reign is over, the only person named (xx. 11-xxi. 8) is 'he that sitteth upon the throne.' The great earthquake and the removal of mountains and islands will be repeated (xvi. 18, 19).

come life and light) another angel arises bearing the seal of the living God. The rulers of the winds are forbidden to let their devastating powers loose on earth and sea and trees, until the faithful have been duly sealed. Of this process nothing is said, and the brevity of the announcement implies that it would be at once understood. 'The mark of the Lord is upon the righteous for their salvation,' said the Solomonic Psalmist, but sinners bear the mark of destruction on their forehead (xv. 8, 10).[1] There were treasures of faith to be gathered, and they who did so were sealed (4 Ezra vi. 5). It was the sign of belonging to God, just as a mark on hand or forehead indicated the worshippers of the Beast (xiii. 16),[2] and would guard them against the attacks of demonic powers (ix. 4). The enumeration of the sealed as Israelites, twelve thousand from each tribe, is in strange contrast by its bareness and reticence, as well as by its emphasis on tribes which had altogether disappeared, with the glowing description of the multitude of the redeemed which follows. Unlike the sealed on earth they are gathered in heaven out of all tribes and peoples and tongues, in festal white with palms in their hands, somewhat like the choirs of boys of noble parentage, according to an inscription at Stratonicea in Caria, who were dressed in white with chaplets on their heads and twigs in their hands, and daily sang hymns in the council chamber in honour of Zeus and Hekatê.[3] The source of the sealing of the Israelites is beyond reach. It may have been an episode of some apocalyptic tradition. In incorporating it into his own work John must have conceived them as Christians, and thus desired to express the unity of the Jewish converts within the Church.

With a sudden transition to the heavenly world the song of celestial worship is heard again in the sevenfold ascription of honour to God by the angelic throng (as in v. 12). The judgment which was awaited after the

[1] The figure goes back to Ezek. ix. 4.

[2] The followers of the Lamb (xiv. 1) have his name and the name of his Father inscribed on their forehead; cp. iii. 12.

[3] Deissmann, *Bible Studies* (1901), p. 370.

catastrophes of the sixth seal, has been accomplished. The faithful have made their robes white in the blood of the Lamb. It is the washing not of martyrdom, but of forgiveness and purification. Thus sanctified they are fitted to serve in the heavenly temple day and night (the familiar expression of continuous devotion). In the venerable figures of religious imagination the blessed life is described under the overshadowing protection of God and the guidance of the Lamb as their shepherd. So in Yima's paradise, under the good shepherd-king, there would be no hunger or thirst, no cold or heat, no old age or death.[1] During the twelfth Egyptian dynasty, about 2000 B.C., the prophet Apoui predicted that after a period of tribulation God would raise up a sovereign without evil in his heart, and would seek out the flock that had gone astray.[2] As the worshipper knelt before Osiris, the judge of the dead, the Deity poured out for him the water of life that his soul might live ; and the quickened spirit addressed his Lord, saying, ' Hail Osiris, I am the servant of thy temple, the inhabitant of thy divine dwelling, thou speakest to me thy words.' In such figures did ancient faith picture the fellowship of grace and adoration between God and man.

IV

At length after the advent of the Wrath with its terrific catastrophes the Lamb opens the seventh seal. But the expected Judgment does not follow. Instead, the songs of creation and the angelic host are hushed, and there is silence in heaven for half an hour. In breathless awe the vast throng waits for the fulfilment of God's purpose. The stillness is at last broken as an angel moves to the altar with a golden censer full of incense, and the smoke carries up the prayers of the saints which have risen from the earth below and have been laid as an offering on the heavenly altar (vi. 9). They uttered the longing of the faithful for the great consummation. As they ascend to

[1] Zend Avesta, in *S.B.E.* xxiii. pp. 112, 253.

[2] Maspero, *New Light on Ancient Egypt*, p. 231.

the throne, the angel flings fire from the altar on to the earth, and thunders and voices and lightnings and an earthquake give solemn warning that the end is not yet. New catastrophes are in preparation. The seven angels which stand before God, whose usual privilege it was to present the prayers of the saints,[1] have received seven trumpets (viii. 2) to give the signal for as many successive calamities. Three of these are associated with three Woes (viii. 13), and Dr. Charles has divined that this was the original number, raised to seven by the incorporation of the first four (vv. 7-12). These are mechanically arranged to injure a third of the earth and its vegetation, of the sea, the fish within it and the ships upon it, of the rivers and springs, and finally of the sun and moon, in such a way that the withdrawal of a third of their light should darken a third of day and night! Whence this fantastic series was derived it is impossible to tell. The extravagant pictures of the demon locusts and two hundred million horsemen (ix. 1-19), worked up with such exuberance of detail, have been doubtless drawn from some alien source.[2] As with the seven Seals the series is arrested at the sixth, not by the imminence of the Judgment, but by the reflection that such chastisements are vain. Of their gross sins, their worship of demons, their idolatries, their murders, sorceries, fornication, thefts, men would not repent (ix. 20, 21).[3]

The sixth Trumpet, carrying with it the second Woe, has been sounded. Following the precedent in the series of the Seals, the blast of the seventh (with its associated third Woe) is postponed to prepare for the introduction

[1] Tobit xii. 15.

[2] For the locusts and the Babylonian centaurs combined with Joel's description, cp. *ante*, p. 108[2].

[3] The formula 'the second woe is past,' now found at xi. 14, probably followed originally at the end of the description of the horsemen. By analogy with the first and second it might be expected that the third woe (announced in xi. 14) would be some new form of torment for the unrepentant. But if so, it has disappeared. The formula is not repeated, and it is not clear that the persecution of the Christians indicated in xii. 12, 17, can be so regarded. Cp. xi. 15, where the seventh trumpet heralds the Judgment instead of the third Woe. For critical discussion and textual restorations cp. Charles, i. pp. 218-223.

of some new material. Before the Judgment (already due to complete the Wrath under the sixth Seal, vi. 17) the Prophet's work must be extended, and the Antichrist must appear at Jerusalem. With the incidental ease of movement in ecstasy or dream the Prophet has changed his position. He is no longer at a door into heaven, he has returned to earth, where he beholds an Angel robed in cloud descending from the sky. Giant in form he belongs to a small group of the 'Strong.'[1] In his hand is a little open book. With a lion-like roar he summons the seven Thunders, apparently a well-known apocalyptic quantity,[2] which immediately respond. The Prophet prepares to record their words, but they are too terrible to be disclosed, and a divine voice forbids their preservation. The angel had planted one foot on the sea and the other on land, and with his right hand lifted to the sky (like Daniel's heavenly visitant, xii. 7), he swears by the Creator of heaven, earth, and sea that there shall be no more delay.[3] At the sound of the seventh Trumpet the mystery or hidden purpose of God shall be completed, and the good tidings in the long series of prophetic promises shall be fulfilled. The powers of evil, borne with so long, shall be vanquished and the Reign of God established. After the example of Ezekiel (ii. 8-iii. 3), the Prophet at the angel's bidding eats the little book. For him, too, it tasted like honey in his mouth, for God's will is sweet to those who obey and trust, even though its contents in experience are bitter. The Prophet's function is not yet discharged, there are still many peoples and nations and tongues and kings over whom he must prophesy. How much of what follows does this announcement include? At any rate a specimen from the new source is contained in the puzzling scenes at Jerusalem (xi. 1-13).[4]

[1] Three such are named altogether; cp. v. 2 and xviii. 21, occasions of great significance.

[2] Seven peals are described in Ps. xxix.

[3] Not 'time shall be no more,' R.V. John was no metaphysician.

[4] The reference to the seventh Trumpet in x. 7 has seemed to some critics an editorial interpolation to bring it into the Trumpet series. Dr. Charles proposes to correct it to 'third,' heralding the third Woe, the destruction of Antichrist before God's reign really begins.

The difficulties of interpretation are many, and so, consequently, are the critical opinions. The prophecy opens with the declaration that the holy city will be in the hands of the Gentiles for a limited time, and it closes with a great earthquake which destroys a tenth part of it. Such anticipations can have no connexion with the actual course of events. The city was captured by the Romans in the year 70, and the Temple was destroyed. What meaning could such a picture have for a writer twenty-five years later after these shattering events? What could have been its sources, and with what intention could he have employed them? To such questions each reader must find his own answers. The scene opens in the precincts of the Temple, and a rod is given to the Prophet with which to measure it and its inner courts. The donor of the reed and the speaker issuing the command are unnamed. The outer court open to Gentiles is occupied by foreigners, who will possess the city for the fixed apocalyptic period of forty-two months or three and a half years.[1] Is this a historical situation? It has been thought to correspond with May, 70 A.D., when the Romans had gained possession of the court of the Gentiles, and the Zealots, confident of ultimate deliverance, held the sanctuary and continued to perform the daily rites. But it seems hardly likely that a prophecy thus conceived could have been contained in this truncated fashion without the slightest indication of the catastrophe which actually followed. The difficulty is not relieved when it is remembered that the destruction of the Temple had been definitely predicted by Jesus himself. It is perhaps more probable, therefore, that the fragment (or, it may be the whole prophecy) expressed the issue of an expected attack upon Jerusalem by Antichrist in command of the Gentile powers. The measurement of the Temple is the symbol of its stability, the pledge of its safety, its priests and worshippers.[2] This is a piece of earlier Jewish apoca-

[1] Dan. vii. 25, xii. 5. On this number cp. *ante*, pp. 17, 56.

[2] It is not to be spiritualised into the upbuilding of the Church (Swete), nor can the reed be identified with the canon of Scripture as the measure of human life (Bishop Wordsworth).

lyptic, and its sequel has been adapted by a Christian hand, perhaps antecedent to John himself, on the basis of cognate material, for the speaker so suddenly introduced in ver. 3 is apparently Christ. The two Witnesses in mourning sackcloth whose career of prophetic warning will last for the same period as the Gentile occupation of the city, are figured (with variations) like the olive trees in Zechariah iv. 11-14. The traits ascribed to them, power to slay their enemies by emitting fire from their mouths, to turn waters into blood and smite the earth with plagues, point clearly to Elijah and Moses. They were the witnesses of Christ at the Transfiguration.

The Beast from the abyss is not the emblematic figure which rises out of the sea (*i.e.* the west, xiii. 1) to represent the Roman power, it is the Adversary himself known as Antichrist. The two prophets are slain in the great city (identified by reference to the crucifixion with Jerusalem),[1] and their bodies lie unburied for the apocalyptic number of three days and a half. Then, like John himself, they are summoned to heaven, though not for the same purpose, and, like Jesus, they are carried up in a cloud (Acts i. 9). A tenth of the inhabitants (it may be presumed) perish in the fall of a tenth part of the city by an earthquake at the witnesses' ascension ; the terrified remainder, whether Jews or the motley Gentile population of peoples and tribes and tongues and nations (ver. 9, cp. x. 11), give glory to the God of heaven. It seems impossible to determine the source of this bizarre representation, to fix its original application, to trace the modifications which it has received at Christian hands,[2] or explain the precise

[1] As the term ' great city ' is elsewhere applied to Rome (*e.g.* xiv. 8, xvi. 19), it has been suggested that the reference to the crucifixion is an erroneous gloss. The mocking titles Sodom and Egypt are then supposed to be more appropriate (but cp. Isai. i. 10). The Greek rendered ' dead bodies ' is singular, as though there had been only one prophet (ver. 8), but other MSS. read the plural (as all do in ver. 9). It is needless, therefore, to erect hypotheses on such slender foundations, as the whole passage is only an antiquarian curiosity. What should take Moses and Elijah to Rome ?

[2] The question is complicated by the identification of the witnesses with Elijah and Enoch (instead of Moses) in the writings of Irenæus, Hippolytus and Tertullian. What independent tradition did they follow ?

meaning in the place assigned to it by John. It cannot correspond with the third Woe, for that is to be announced by the seventh Trumpet which has not yet sounded. And when it does sound, it is the signal for a burst of celestial triumph (vv. 15-19). In language founded on the ancient 'Psalms of Accession' the heavenly host declare that the sovereignty of the world has been assumed by God and his Messiah. The Almighty, who is and was, is no longer 'the Coming One,' he is already there, he has 'taken his great power' and begun to reign. A single stanza recites all the incidents of what was technically known as 'the Consummation of the Age,'[1] the rage of the nations,[2] the advent of the Wrath, the Judgment with its award to believers of every spiritual rank, and, above all, the destruction of the destroyers of the earth, the final overthrow of the powers of wickedness. It is the programme of the events of the End, recited by the assessors of the Deity, the twenty-four Elders, in striking contrast with the half-hour's silence on the opening of the seventh Seal. Then, the prayers of the saints went up to the throne, fire from the altar was flung upon the earth, and thunders and voices, lightnings and an earthquake, gave warning of dread events to come (viii. 5). The urgency is greater now. In solemn guarantee of the Elders' song the heavenly temple is opened, and the heavenly ark—symbol of God's covenant with Israel—is revealed. Once more the crisis is marked for those on earth by lightnings and voices, thunders and an earthquake, and great hail. What do they portend? The riddle is the hardest in the book.

[1] Matt. xiii. 39, 49; xxiv. 3, R.V. margin.

[2] Cp. Ps. ii. 1, 2; xcix. 1; and the whole group celebrating the divine sovereignty, xciii. ff.

LECTURE IV

THE DRAGON AND THE BEAST

The blast of the seventh Trumpet was followed, as we have seen, by the angelic chorus announcing that the rule of the world had given place to the rule of God and his Messiah. A mighty cosmic revolution had been effected. The Powers of Evil had been subdued, and the sovereignty of the Almighty established. It is the close of the world's history. The Wrath has arrived, the time for the Judgment has come. But the Prophet has not yet fulfilled his commission to 'prophesy about many peoples and nations and tongues and kings' (x. 11). There is much to tell of the great struggle which would 'destroy the earth's destroyers,' concentrated for Christian experience in the power of Rome as the representative or agent of the age-long Adversary, the Sâtân or Devil. With this great conflict and its issue the rest of the book is concerned. Terrific plagues have in vain summoned the nations to repent. Now the ultimate author of all idolatry and wickedness is to be brought upon the scene, and exhibited in the warfare which will end in his defeat. This is the theme of the fantastic story in chap. xii., which provides the introduction to all that follows. It is a kind of brief mystery-drama in three acts. The problem is to discover their connexion, the nature of the actors, and the sources and original meaning of the plot. The modern path of investigation was first opened by Prof. Dieterich of Bonn in his essay on some of the by-ways of Hellenistic religion (*Abraxas*, 1891); and it was pursued with great effect by the brilliant German scholar, Hermann Gunkel,

in a treatise on *Creation and Chaos* (1895). His penetrating criticism proved the starting point of all subsequent enquiry.[1]

I

The drama opens in heaven, where a majestic woman, crowned with twelve stars, vested in the sun, and standing on the moon, is approaching child-birth, and strangely enough for a mother of such dignity, the process is painful and she cries out to be delivered. Over against her stands a great red dragon with seven heads and ten horns. His mighty tail sweeps the sky, and gathers out of it a third part of the stars, which he flings down to the earth. He waits upon the woman's travail that when the babe is born he may devour it. The child is a son, destined to rule the nations with a rod of iron, and before the dragon can seize it, it is caught up in safety to the throne of God. The mother, divested apparently of her celestial ornaments, flees into the wilderness to a place divinely prepared, where she is to be mysteriously nourished for the familiar period of twelve hundred and sixty days.

The second scene resumes the situation in heaven. The dragon is still there, and Michael and his angels go forth to war with him and his wicked host. They are defeated, and the dragon, now formally identified with the Devil, is cast out of heaven with his rebellious crew. His fall to earth is celebrated with a triumph-song in the world above, proclaiming the victory as the manifestation of the Rule of God and of his Christ, but foreboding woe to earth and sea, for the devil's wrath will be fierce, his overthrow has warned him that his time is short.

In the third scene the Adversary renews his persecution of the woman. She is, after all, not yet securely sheltered in her appointed retreat ; so two wings are given her from the great eagle to bear her out of peril. The enraged

[1] His views were further developed in his essay *Zum Religionsgeschichtlichen Verständniss des N.Ts.* (1903) ; cp. *ante*, p. 93[2].

dragon vomits a river to wash her away, but before it can touch her the friendly earth opens her mouth and swallows it. The woman, meantime, reaches her refuge in safety, to be maintained in seclusion for Daniel's 'time, and times, and half a time.' Baffled in his pursuit the dragon retires to make war with the rest of her seed.

What is to be made of these strange figures, and still stranger incidents, and, perhaps, strangest of all, the gaps, the incoherences, the incongruities of the tale? Where do these mysterious personalities come from, the woman dressed in sun and stars, supported by the moon, and the dragon with the mighty tail standing opposite to her? How is it that so regal a being suffers in labour? Where is the child born, and who is his father? One thing, at any rate, is clear. His destiny to rule the nations marks him as the future Messiah. The mother's flight into the wilderness implies that she is on earth. How did she get there, and did the dragon descend to pursue her? If so, did he return to the upper world, and what was the reason for Michael's attack? Who gave the woman wings for her flight, and where was the wilderness which sheltered her? It is needless to ask more questions. The brevity of the narrative implies more than reliance on the intelligence of the average reader. It rests upon a store of traditions, images, beliefs, symbols, as a common possession over a wide area. They can be applied in different connexions, adjusted with variations to fresh schemes, and combined with independent forms of thought and conditions of life. And they go back to certain elemental facts of universal experience and universal hope, the struggle between light and darkness, good and evil, and the ultimate triumph of truth and right, the issue of age-long conflict in abiding peace.

Of such a legend Greek mythology presented a conspicuous type in the birth of Apollo and his combat with the great dragon Python. Its roots may already be traced in the Homeric hymn to the radiant deity of light; and it became popular in many forms in literature and art. On its presentation by the Latin fabulist Hyginus,

in the days of Augustus, Dieterich summarised its chief points as follows : [1]

> The dragon Python, son of the Earth, dreaded slayer of man and beast, dwelt on Mount Parnassus, and it was prophesied that he in his turn should be slain by the son of Leto. Leto became with child by Zeus, but the jealous Hera contrived that she should only give birth where the sun did not shine. Python, observing her pregnancy, began to pursue her to kill her. But Boreas (the north wind) carried her to the great sea-god Poseidon, who brought her to Ortygia (another name for Delos), and covered the island with his waves. Python, unable to find her, returned to Parnassus. Poseidon raised the island out of the waters, and four days after his birth the young god Apollo hastened to Parnassus and slew the dragon.

Here was a tale familiar to the cities of the East. It was the subject of dramatic representation with music and dance. Three hundred years before our era the famous sculptor Euphranor produced a great bronze group of Leto in flight before her pursuer. On coins of Ephesus, Miletus and other cities, she was similarly figured. There were various forms of the legend, as the birth of Apollo (and his sister Artemis as well) was sometimes placed before her flight, and she was then depicted bearing the two children in her arms. From ancient hints Dieterich conjectured a version which told how in the midst of the uproar of the floods of the chaotic world raised by the dragon the Earth came to her aid, and raised up the island of Delos, waste and lonely, to receive her. On this basis of common elements—a woman about to bear a child of divine origin, a hostile dragon pursuing her, her flight endangered by waters, the assistance of the earth, and her refuge in a desolate retreat—Dieterich suggested a rearrangement of the apocalyptic narrative, in which its first and third sections were joined and followed by the second on the war in heaven, both narratives being adjusted to the situation of the Christians under persecution. Moreover, he recognised the corre-

[1] *Abraxas*, p. 117. Dr. Charles points out that Dupuis, in his *Origine de tous les Cultes* (1794), iii. 49, had already referred to it.

spondence of the seven-headed dragon with the similar seven-headed serpent of Babylonian mythology fighting against the powers of light,[1] or the great dragon Tiamat, the monster of Chaos in the Mesopotamian story of the Creation, slain by Marduk, the champion of the gods.

It was on this figure that Gunkel dwelt as the ultimate source of a myth which had spread, like the story of the Deluge, all through Western Asia to the shores of the Mediterranean. There was the dragon, seven-headed and red. There was the young god of light who slew him and brought order out of darkness and confusion. There, too, was his mother, crowned with stars, who bore the title of 'the lady of the heavenly tiara.' But no myth of the child's birth, the dragon's persecution, the mother's flight, such as Gunkel provisionally constructed, has been found in the ancient texts, and that suggestion he subsequently withdrew. But he divined that at a very early date the myth of a World-Deliverer had become 'international,' and that its earliest form might be sought in the Babylonian texts in the conflict between light and darkness, the symbols in later mythologies of good and evil.

Of this a remarkable illustration was provided by another German scholar, the late Prof. Bousset, in his commentary on the Revelation in 1896.[2] The story of Leto has some striking resemblances to the tale of the Egyptian goddess Hathor-Isis, mother of the sun-god Horus. But Leto is never represented as a heavenly being. She is no virgin-deity, who can conceive without help. Isis is queen of heaven, whose robe is sometimes adorned with moon and stars, or who in other representations stands upon the moon,[3] while in identification with Hathor she bears the sun upon her head. In the Osiris myth the god has become her consort, and after he has

[1] Cp. Schrader-Zimmern, *K.A.T.*[3], 504, 514; a familiar figure in later imagination. Wetstein *in loc.* quotes a Talmudic story of a certain Rabbi Acha who fell asleep in a lecture-room, and dreamed of a dragon with seven heads, which fell off one by one at his prayers. In the curious Coptic treatise *Pistis Sophia* (ed. Schmidt, 1905, p. 88) a seven headed basilisk oppresses Pistis Sophia. Cp. Odes of Solomon xxii. 5.

[2] A second edition appeared in 1906.

[3] Boll, *op. cit.* p. 100.

been slain by the dragon Set (identified by the Greeks with Typhon), Isis, pursued by Set, gathers up his bones, and in wondrous fashion gives birth to a son, the young sun-god. In a papyrus skiff she flees from the destroyer, and escapes through the marshes to a legendary floating island. There, according to another version, the child is born in safety. An Osirian hymn adds a curious detail: 'Isis makes a breeze with her feathers, and produces wind with her wings.' The same hymn relates the victory of Horus in subsequent combat with the dragon, whom he slays with his sword.[1]

Here is the same theme as in the Greek tale, the conquest of a hostile cosmic power by the god of light. Some of its details are in closer accord with the Apocalyptist's figure, the virgin royalty of the mother, and the strange use of wings in her flight. Bousset concludes that we have here a Gentile myth applied to Jesus, in an independent fragment of Christian origin. The transfer and adaptation have been made with great boldness. The author of Revelation found his material already prepared; if he had moulded it freely, he would not have placed a story of the birth of the Messiah immediately after the description of the solemn close of the world's history. It does, indeed, show signs of redaction. The triumph-song of the saints (vv. 10, 11) interrupts the connexion of vv. 9 and 12, and may be referred to the latest hand in the whole book; and similarly the close (ver. 17) prepares the way for the description of the existing situation in chap. xiii. Moreover, the story of the war in heaven is quite independent of what precedes. No cause is alleged for Michael's onset against the dragon. The Messiah on the throne beside God plays no part in it, and it has no conclusion. The Devil is cast out from the skies, but his power is not destroyed. The fragment is but a torso, wrested from its original context, and interrupts the story of the woman's flight. It belongs to another version of the ancient strife between good and evil.

Along another line of interpretation, however, a quite different result was reached. Supported by the dis-

[1] Bousset [2], p. 354.

tinguished name of Wellhausen it sought for a closer accord with actual historical conditions. The mysterious woman was, indeed, an ideal. She was the symbol of the theocracy of Israel. The dragon was identified with the beast (xiii.), the emblem of the hated Roman power. Originally Jewish, the figure of the woman was transferred to the Church, and her flight into the wilderness, which first perhaps denoted the (hypothetical) escape of a group of pious Pharisees from the threatened destruction of Jerusalem, was applied to the historical withdrawal of some of the Christians to a settlement at Pella, among the rolling hills east of the Jordan.[1] On this view the story was largely reshaped under the influence of the Church. The assumption of the Messiah to heaven, for example, was no part of Jewish expectation. And the attempt to connect the gift of 'the two wings of the great eagle' with the poetic figure of the divine support of Israel in the wilderness (Deut. xxxii. 11) cannot be called successful.

Like some of his predecessors, Dr. Charles clearly perceives that the stories of the persecution and flight of the woman and the war in heaven were originally independent, and he accordingly separates vv. 7-9, 12, from 1-5, 13-17.[2] Both narratives are attributed to Jewish sources, the first being regarded as a native product of Judaism proper, and the second as a heathen myth adapted first by a Jew and then by a Christian. The 'sources' are supposed to have been written, as the critic detects signs of translation from Hebrew or Aramaic. In so brief a document they are, of course, scanty, and the reader cannot help asking himself whether they may not rather (elsewhere as well as here) be due to the mental habit of a writer steeped in the language of the Old Testament Scriptures, who first thinks in their idioms and frames his Greek to match them. We must not picture the Prophet with a couple of parchments before

[1] This latter application had been often made, *e.g.* in this country by Dr. Swete (1906). On this Gunkel remarked that if the Apocalyptist only wanted to say that, he might have said it a little clearer.

[2] VV. 6, 10-11, are additions, and changes have been made in 3, 5, 9, 10, 17.

him, from which he translates first one section of his tale and then another. But the myth of the woman was not borrowed wholly or directly from any specific form of the international story, though it has most affinities with the Egyptian ; Dr. Charles says frankly that the Seer's vision goes back before Christ, ' of a glorious goddess of the sun is born a wondrous child.' [1] What explanation can be found for the adoption of such a figure into the Christian scheme ? Without attempting to discuss literary or linguistic detail, let us ask what was its significance for its present context.

From the conclusion of the story it is plain that the woman represents the Church ; her ' seed '—she has thus had other offspring beside the ' man child ' (ver. 5)—hold the testimony of Jesus, and are in danger of persecution even unto death. The child is identified with Christ by the Messianic announcement that he is to rule the nations with a rod of iron (ver. 5, cp. ii. 27, xix. 15). These are two fixed points which must govern the whole interpretation. That the Messiah was really a heavenly being, created before sun or star, was part of one form of the great hope ever since the second century B.C. And the Greek translators of Isaiah's prophecy had used the word *Parthenos*, ' virgin,' already applied to the mother of Jesus (Matt. i. 23). But it is evident that John soars far above Mary of Nazareth into an ideal world. The heavenly woman has accordingly been identified with an impersonation of the theocracy of Israel, conceived as the mother of the Messiah. Christians, as constituting the true Israel, the heirs of the promises, might thus be regarded as her ' seed.' A divine Messiah, however, required in some sense a divine mother, and there do not seem to be any indications of a pre-existent Israel as a heavenly power. But there are such hints in early Christian literature concerning the Church. Particular congregations, as we have seen, had their ' angels.' Why should not the whole Church, collectively, have a similar celestial type ? In the glowing imagination of the Apostle Paul the Corinthian believers, in spite of their

[1] *Comm.* i. 299.

quarrels and sins, had been presented by him as a pure virgin for espousal to Christ (2 Cor. xi. 2). Wider application of this idea soon produced the conception of a pre-existent Church above. The whole drama of existence was in some sense prepared on high. There Moses, for instance, was reserved in readiness for his high destiny till the hour for Israel's liberation needed him. There were the Christians chosen in Christ before the world's foundation (Ephes. i. 4). There was the General Assembly of the first-born whose names were inscribed in the heavenly register, the 'book of life from the foundation of the world' (Hebr. xii. 23; Rev. xvii. 8). In the scantiness of early Christian literature it is difficult to determine the point at which a particular idea first gained definite expression. But in the atmosphere generated by the doctrine of counterparts between the worlds below and above it was not long before the conception of a Church in heaven was well established. The homilist could soon appeal to 'the books of the Apostles' in proof that 'the Church belongs not to the present but from the beginning'; and he could urge upon the brethren that 'if we do the will of our Father, God, we shall belong to the first Church, the spiritual one which was created before the sun and moon.'[1] The conception was thus claimed as an element of apostolic teaching. With the tendency to present ideas in personal form the Church was soon figured as a woman. So she appeared to Hermas, aged, but in most radiant vesture, who tells him that the Church was created by God's Wisdom and Providence when the world was made. In a later vision she is young and beautiful; and before the second century runs out she is the Virgin Mother of the faithful, and (like Christ) the First-born of God, of which the Church on earth is a copy.[2]

The Woman arrayed in the sun is thus the divine type of the agency or sphere of salvation. 'Manifested in the flesh of Christ,'[3] she may be conceived as his mother;

[1] 2 Clem. xiv. 1, 2 (tr. Lake).

[2] See the passages quoted in the author's *Phases of Early Christianity*, pp. 144-149.

[3] 2 Clem. xiv. 3.

and her travail is the ideal anticipation of the 'birth-pains' of the Messiah. Over against her stands his great antagonist, the Adversary or Sâtân, known in Jewish apocalyptic by the name of Beliar. It will be the Messiah's function to make war upon Beliar; the promise ran, 'Beliar shall be bound by him,' and 'he shall be cast into the fire for ever.'[1] Of this (it may be assumed) the dragon was aware, as Python had learned that he would be destroyed by Apollo. He seeks an opportunity, therefore, to devour him. In the brevity of the story it is not quite clear where the child is born; but the identification with Christ renders it probable that it was on earth. Had the woman descended thither already in flight from the dragon, or had he succeeded in casting her down from the heavenly sphere where angelic help might be procured? The question shall be answered from another point of view directly. Meantime it may be remarked that the real significance of the birth is not the entry of Jesus on his human life. How is it, some critics have asked, that the Gospel story is ignored?[2] The reason is that the birth of the child and his rapture to God's throne are different aspects of the same event. That is his birth into the heavenly world to which he rightfully belongs. The Prophet has in mind the resurrection and ascension which made him 'First-born from the dead' (i. 5).[3]

[1] Testaments, 'Dan' v. 10; 'Levi' xviii. 12; 'Judah' xxv. 3.

[2] To the critics who find it difficult to understand the entire omission of reference to the human life of Jesus, it may be suggested that in the woman's birth-pains there may be a subtle reference to the sufferings and death of Jesus, ideally felt by the Mother, and in the dragon's hostility to the 'trials' which continued from the beginning to the close of his ministry, Luke iv. 13, xxii. 28. Such allusiveness is common enough in the application of symbols to concrete situations. It is not only the conception of the Woman which (in Dr. Charles's phrase) 'is very elastic.' The birth-pains, again, reappear in a different connexion, denoting the disorders, social and cosmic, which will precede the advent of the Son of Man (Mark xiii. 8).

[3] Victorinus, Bishop of Pettau in Pannonia (Dalmatia), who was believed to have been martyred in the Diocletian persecution, 304, identified the Woman with the Church, but not in the sense suggested above, 'Ecclesia est antiqua patrum et prophetarum et sanctorum apostolorum.' 'Robed in the sun' meant the hope of resurrection, the moon indicated the hope which would not be entirely extinguished even in those asleep. *Corpus Scriptorum Eccles. Latin.* vol. 49, ed. Haussleiter (1916).

Now the story seems to have been cast into the mould of astrology, like the presentation of the Four Horsemen.[1] The conception of the Church as a virgin found its zodiacal equivalent in the constellation Virgo. With this constellation the Mesopotamian goddess Ishtar, Lady of the gods and Queen of heaven, had long before (it would seem) been identified.[2] To this character in the Eastern Mediterranean the Egyptian Isis had succeeded. She, too, was Virgin, Queen of heaven, crowned as Mother of the stars.[3] And over against her in the sky was the great dragon known by the Greek name Hydra. Its position is described by the word 'stood' (ver. 4), which Boll has shown to be the technical term in astrology for fixing the place of a star. The dragon had an enormously long body, covering the four constellations from the Crab to the Balance, including the Virgin. These four constituted one-third of the Twelve Signs. The switch of the dragon's tail could thus 'cast a third part of the stars to the earth,' and the Woman then made a forced descent to the required scene of birth. Boll, it is true, supposes that the birth took place in heaven, *i.e.* in one of its lower tiers, and the child was caught up to the highest, and placed on his own throne, but the Prophet elsewhere conceives him as sharing the throne of God (iii. 21).[4] The remainder of the story needs no detailed discussion. The episode of the war in heaven belongs to a different order of mythological expression,[5] and is apparently introduced here to

[1] See Boll, chap. vii. [2] Schrader-Zimmern, *K.A.T.*[3], 427.

[3] Dr. Charles recognises the signs of the Zodiac in the woman's crown, i. 315.

[4] The Lamb, even, when first introduced, is pictured 'in the midst of the throne (of God) and the four living creatures' (v. 6) The explanation suggested above renders a reference to Dan. viii. 10 unnecessary. Boll pronounces no opinion on the interpretation of the dragon's action with its tail, as it has no meaning for him in changing the situation of the Woman, who remains in heaven till her child is born. It appears to me necessary to explain how she reached the earth, and its mention before the birth occurs confirms it. Boll apparently thinks that she fled to the earth, and after the dragon had been himself cast down returned to heaven to spend her seven half-years of concealment where she was before. But how could this be described as 'concealment' among the hosts rejoicing in the dragon's fall? And what about the river on the way back to the sky?

[5] See below, Lect. VI. p. 163 f.

bring the persecuting dragon again within reach of the Woman. In his pursuit she is endowed with wings, such as Isis bore, and possibly Ishtar before her, and the zodiacal Virgo always among the Greeks. Behind 'the great eagle' may lie another astrological symbol,[1] such as Dr. Moffatt has endeavoured to find for the river vomited by the serpent.[2] The incident sounds like the episode of a folk-tale, when the friendly Earth comes to the rescue of a distressed heroine. For the impersonation of the Church the Prophet has no more use. He can only convey her into 'the wilderness,' a dim indefinite No-man's Land. He is concerned with 'her seed,' the believers on whom the dragon is about to begin war. To watch their danger and encourage them to meet it, he takes his stand on the shore of the sea.[3]

II

The vision of the great sign in heaven, the birth and ascension of the Messiah, the rout of the dragon and his host, the persecution of the seed of the Church-Mother, prepares the way for the introduction of the concrete powers of the great Divina Commedia whose overthrow is really the theme of the whole book. The glories of the Almighty's Rule on high have been already revealed. For their manifestation on earth a fixed time has been decreed. It remains to show the source and nature of the trials to which the faithful will be exposed, and to inspire them with courage to resist them even unto death. The next vision accordingly, describes the World-power under two aspects, the might of the Roman Empire and the demands of its religion, presented in the forms of two Beasts.

[1] Boll, p. 113. The donor of the wings is not mentioned.

[2] *Expositor's Greek Test.* v. p. 428.

[3] xiii. 1*a*, A.V. 'I stood.' Where the textual critics are divided as to the reading to be chosen, the student's preference may be determined by general considerations, and I follow Moffatt (cp. his *Exposition* and his *N.T. in English*). The situation is then analogous to that of Dan. vii. 2, implying that the Seer was on the margin of the 'great sea.'

Our Revisers have followed the reading which placed the Dragon, intending to make war upon the saints, on the sea-shore. Geographically he is on the coast of Asia Minor. The Prophet (whose own position is then unspecified), like a second Daniel, sees a Beast coming up out of the waters (xiii. 1). The vision is modelled on the Old Testament Apocalypse, when Daniel beholds four great types of imperial rule — Babylonian, Median, Persian, Greek, in the form of four animals, arise out of 'the great sea' lashed by the four winds, the emblems of the turbulence and confusion of human life (vii. 2 ff.). The whole vision is full of the older phrases, adapted to the new situation by the Christian author. How far the derivation is direct, or how far it rested on some intervening document, cannot be positively determined. It has been long surmised that beneath the Prophet's picture lies a shorter piece of Jewish Apocalypse, in its turn based on Daniel's language.[1] The solution of this question, however interesting in itself, does not affect John's meaning, save in so far as it concerns his skill in refashioning his literary materials. We may pass on, therefore, to enquire what he sought to teach, merely observing that there may have been many sketches of possible developments current in circles which concerned themselves especially about the 'Last Things,' such as the Apostle Paul's anticipation of a coming revelation of the Man of Sin (2 Thess. ii).

Out of the sea, then, comes up a Beast, ten-horned and seven-headed. It is the earthly counterpart of the Dragon, and the unholy pair are in immediate contrast with God and Christ. The crowns, which probably had no numerical or other significance on the Dragon, have been transferred to the horns for a reason to be noted directly. The Beast himself is a compound of Daniel's animals, leopard, bear, and lion, swift, fierce, and strong, and the fourth beast with its ten horns. Their united heads, the leopard having four, make up the same number as the Dragon's, but he is oddly provided with only one mouth, the lion's. On this amalgamated monster the

[1] Of this Dr. Charles provides a conjectural reconstruction, i. p. 341.

Dragon confers his power and throne and great authority. If this investiture be conceived as taking place when the Beast reaches the shore, where the Dragon (who may be supposed to have summoned him) stands waiting for him, the reading 'he stood' acquires greater appositeness.[1] The apocalyptic view of the existing order of society was fundamentally pessimistic. The kingdoms of the world are in the hands of the Devil, and in the story of the Temptation he claims the power to give them to whom he pleases. There are even traces of the recognition of a Kingdom of Satan opposed to the Kingdom of God in the language of Jesus (Matt. xii. 26, 28); but he makes no political application of it; the spheres and demands of Cæsar and God, according to his famous answer to the Pharisees, are different but not antagonistic. The Apostle Paul saw the mischievous action of 'the God of this Age' in the blinded eyes of unbelievers (2 Cor. iv. 4), but he enjoined subjection to constituted authority, for 'the powers that be are ordained of God.' If the rioters of Thessalonica complained that Paul and his companions had 'turned the world upside down,' the Asiarchs of Ephesus—themselves the responsible promoters of the worship of the Emperor—'being his friends' were urgent that he should not endanger himself by entering the theatre in the uproar. Similarly the Fourth Evangelist sets the 'Ruler of this world' over against the Son of God from heaven, but Jesus recognises that Pilate's power to release or to execute him is really given him from above.

The Beast, as subsequent interpretations show, has a double character. The language of the Prophet sways to and fro, from the general to the particular. In one aspect the figure represents the imperial system, in its broadest and most inclusive sense, in another it is identified with a specific person. This is one of the reasons which have led critics to seek for a Jewish antecedent to the vision, to

[1] Unlike such critics as Tischendorf and von Soden, and such expositors as Moffatt and Peake, Dr. Charles declares the evidence for the R.V. reading overwhelming, and lays it down that 'there can be no question as to the original text.' Yet in an important passage (ver. 10) he follows unhesitatingly (and I think rightly) the reading of a single MS. on the ground of the sense.

which little touches defining a new situation have been added to suit fresh circumstances. The beasts of Daniel typified four successive world-empires, but the fourth with its ten horns denoting ten kings (the Greek kingdom of Syria) was nevertheless concentrated into one, the hated persecutor Antiochus Epiphanes. With apocalyptic elasticity the symbol was transferred to Rome. We shall see the Roman power by and by exhibited as a sumptuously dressed Woman seated on the seven-headed Beast, and the seven heads receive a curious double explanation. They are the seven hills of the city, and the succession of seven emperors, the one permanent in place, the other continuous in time. Upon their heads are ' names of blasphemy ' (xiii. 1), titles which designate their bearers as divine, Augustus, Divus (even Dea of a lady of the imperial family), ' Son of God.' [1] This is the reason, probably, why the Dragon's crowns are transferred (increased by three) to the Beast's horns.[2] The Beast himself, therefore, is not a single Cæsar. But yet at the close of the first scene in which he appears, he has the number of a man, which points, according to the most widely-accepted interpretation, to a well-known historic occupant of the throne. Of this, however, more by and by. One of the heads is ' as it were slain,' a kind of diabolic parallel to the similar aspect of the Lamb. But the death-stroke has been healed—the episode seems to be an intrusion in verse 3—and the Prophet describes the worship paid to the Dragon and his representative, with a parody of the ancient phrase, ' Who is like unto thee, O Yahweh ? ' as men asked, ' Who is like unto the Beast ? ' He had the same mouth as Daniel's ten-horned beast (vii. 8) ' speaking great things ' ; and like his predecessor who spoke marvellous things against God (xi. 36) he blasphemed the divine Name, and his Dwelling, interpreted by the clause which follows as his abode in heaven. The Prophet sees him endowed with authority like Nebuchadrezzar over peoples and nations and languages

[1] The reader must remember that the Greek had not the same significance in an inscription as in a Gospel.

[2] For another interpretation see below, Lect. V. p. 158, on xvii. 12.

(Dan. v. 19) ; his worship gathers in all the inhabitants of the earth. But a divine limit is imposed upon him. The Powers of Evil are, after all, subject to the decrees of Heaven. The Beast has but forty-two months to reign.

To this universal homage there is, after all, an exception. There are those who will not join in the imperial cult. On these he is permitted to make war, and overcome them. Who are these saints ? They are identified by the Prophet with Christians whose names have been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life belonging to the slaughtered Lamb. That these last words are an addition is rendered practically certain by the recurrence of the preceding phrase without them in xvii. 8. Daniel's mysterious instructor promises deliverance to ' every one that shall be found written in the book,' xii. 1. The conception of this register of heavenly citizenship is met with already in the story of Moses ; it gathers into itself the idea of a record of deeds good and ill, which can be opened for judgment (Dan. vii. 10) ; and it passes on in later Apocalyptic towards the idea of predestination, in accordance with the growing conviction of fixed plans and purposes in God.[1] The saint will not, indeed, escape suffering and death. But he can face them sure of an eternal reward ; out of all the peoples who will be rejected he will be saved for everlasting blessedness. ' Let those who have ears listen ! ' cried the Prophet, and in the phrases of Jeremiah [2] he proclaims :

> ' If any man is for captivity,
> Into captivity he goeth :
> If any man is to be slain by the sword,
> By the sword is he to be slain.' [3]

It was a grim teaching, but the conviction of a divine destiny is a mighty source of strength.

Who, then, was the smitten Cæsar, and who were the saints with whom the Beast was empowered to make war ? To the first question there have been various answers.

[1] See the valuable note by Dr. Charles on Enoch xlvii. 3 ; and compare what has been already said on p. 90 f.

[2] xliii. 11 ; xv. 2. [3] Cp. Charles, i. p. 355.

Some have sought him in the first great imperial figure, Julius Cæsar. But though he suffered the death-stroke, it can hardly be said that the wounds inflicted by Brutus and Cassius were healed by the events that followed. Others have found an explanation in the anarchy which beset the world as three emperors followed one another after Nero's death in the year 68-69, until Vespasian restored order and peace.[1] Yet a third answer fixed on the Emperor Gaius, commonly known by his nickname Caligula. Early in his reign his life was threatened by a dangerous illness from which he recovered. The 'death-stroke,' however, implies the blow of a sword. But if this item be regarded as a later addition, interrupting the context to supply a detail for identification with another, the conditions of the rest of the vision would suit Gaius very well. Intoxicated with power and infatuated with his own divinity, he pushed the demands of its recognition to the most extravagant excess. Of the horror and the resistance excited among the Jews by his order for the erection of his statue as an object of worship in the Temple at Jerusalem the historian Josephus, born about 37, writing fifty years later, and in possession of first-hand evidence under Domitian and so contemporary with John, has left a vivid account.[2]

The Governor of Syria, Petronius, was instructed to march to Jerusalem, and place the Emperor's statue for religious homage in the sanctuary.[3] A few years before, Pilate had introduced imperial standards by night into the city, and their presence excited such vehement

[1] It may be useful to set down the several names and dates :

Augustus	B.C. 27-14 A.D.	Galba, Otho, Vitellius,	
Tiberius	14-37	Vespasian	69-79 A.D.
Gaius	37-41	Titus	79-81
Claudius	41-54	Domitian	81-96
Nero	54-68		

[2] *Jewish War*, II. x. Whatever be the actual truth of some of its details, it is at least valuable as an expression of current feeling. For the earlier account by Philo of Alexandria, see his treatise on the *Embassies*, xxxi. ff.

[3] It has sometimes been conjectured that the veiled language of Mark xiii. 14 alludes to this or some similar attempt. But the reference may be to Antichrist.

resistance that he was compelled to remove them. Petronius was met at Ptolemais (the modern Acre) by a vast crowd of Jews, men, women and children, in indignant protest. His orders were to execute the leaders of opposition, and reduce the rest of the nation to slavery. The impassioned pleas which he encountered led him to change his plans. Leaving the statue in the care of his troops by the sea, he hastened to Tiberias and convoked a large assembly of all ranks. He warned them of the power of Rome and the danger of disobedience, and declared that as all other subject nations had placed the imperial images in their cities among the rest of their gods, refusal to admit them was tantamount to rebellion and insulting to the majesty of the Cæsar. If they urged that they must obey their laws, 'Am I not also bound,' he asked, 'to obey my lord's law? I am under authority as well as you.' The resolute Jews would not give way. Twice a day, they declared, they offered sacrifices for the Emperor and the Roman people; but if he would set up his statues he must first sacrifice the whole nation, and they offered themselves, their wives, and their children, to the sword. The conflict continued for seven weeks. The operations of agriculture were stopped, and the country continued unsown. At last Petronius risked the Emperor's wrath and gave way, and wrote to his master to explain. The vicissitudes of the weather in the Mediterranean saved his life. The ship that brought the angry letter of Gaius threatening him with death was delayed for three months upon the voyage by storms. Twenty-seven days before its arrival came the news that on 24th January (41 A.D.) Gaius had himself been murdered.

Such was the heroic temper with which Israel defended its Law. The scattered Christian communities had no great national tradition to support them. They felt the same kind of abhorrence as the Jew, but they had not the same power of collective opposition. The danger of apostasy was more serious, and the need for encouragement to steadfastness was the more grave. They were faced by every kind of social pressure, and the worship to

which they were bidden was made as attractive as possible. This is presented in the form of a second Beast which comes up from the land.[1] His single head bears only two horns like a lamb ; he has a gentle and seductive appearance, unwarlike and peaceful. But his speech is the loud and presumptuous talk of the Dragon. It is his business to promote the imperial cult, and for this end he resorts to all kinds of magic. He will make fire come down out of the sky ; he will persuade the multitude to erect statues to the Beast who had the sword-stroke and yet lived ; he will even animate them with breath and make them speak. The Christian author of the Ascension of Isaiah announces that the emperor's image will be set up in every city, and the power of his miracles will be displayed in every region (iv. 10, 11). Contemporary historians are full of instances. At Caligula's court magicians like the Egyptian Helicon and Apelles of Ascalon wrought marvels. Storm machines were exhibited which imitated the lightnings and thunders of Jupiter of the Capitol. Simon the Mage (according to a later account) claimed to make statues move and animate the inanimate ; and the practice of ventriloquism by Apollonius and other wonder-workers deceived even the elect. It was even apprehended that the greater number of those banded together to receive the Beloved, waiting for the returning Christ, would be turned aside.[2]

What was this second Beast, whose two lamb-like horns suggests a satirical contrast to the Lamb on high ? In later scenes (xvi. 19, xix. 20) he is represented as a false prophet, as though he were a specific individual. The analogy of the first Beast makes it possible that this figure also may cover a double character, a system or order, and a typical person.[3] The historian Mommsen

[1] The comparison sometimes made with Leviathan and Behemoth, monsters of sea and land, *e.g.* 4 Ezra vi. 49, does not seem at all apposite, as they would only appear (according to Apoc. Baruch, xxix. 3, 4) when the Messiah began to be revealed, and they would serve as food for the members of his kingdom.

[2] Ascension of Isaiah, tr. Charles, iv. 9.

[3] Dr. Charles finds a Hebrew source in vv. 11-17 dealing with a Jewish Antichrist, adapted to a different situation, i. 344.

saw in it the Roman prefecture or magistracy charged with the duty of promoting the Cæsar cult ; and a long series of expositors have accepted the view that it embodied the associations formed for the purpose under the Diet of Asia with their priesthoods and supporters. The worship was often conducted with great pomp. The statue might be of colossal size, and possibly even gilded all over.[1] Choral services were performed with bands of singers. Associations of choristers had been established as early as the days of Augustus. Under Hadrian at Pergamum they bore the title ' Singers of Divine Augustus and Divine Rome.' With songs and chants and processions the celebrations of the imperial majesty were made as attractive as possible. To this was added another element implied in the title ' false prophet,' that of teaching, known by the name of ' theology.' This was an exhortation or sermon delivered by a preacher who bore the title *theologos*.[2] How these ' divines ' were appointed the inscriptions do not explain. They appear in some of the mystery-cults, as well as among the associations of the ' Friends of Augustus ' which can be traced under Caligula in a number of cities named in our New Testament, Miletus, Pergamum, Laodicea, Adramyttium, Smyrna, Sardis.[3] Like the prophetesses of the Christians, women sometimes undertook the duty. The addresses no doubt paraded the glories of the Empire, recited the benefits of the Roman administration, and exalted the ' clemency ' of the reigning Cæsar. To such themes may have been added warnings to dissentients and threats against obstinate opposition, such as might be heard in churches supported by the terrors of everlasting fire. It was even anticipated that every one would be compelled –' small and great, rich and poor, slave and free '—to bear a mark on the right hand or the forehead as a sign of devotion. It was an ancient custom among alien cults, long ago

[1] Philo, *op. cit.* xxx.

[2] It is the title of St. John ' the divine ' in our N.T. prefixed to the Revelation. Cp. Poland, *Gesch. des Griech. Vereinswesen* (1909), pp. 268, 399.

[3] Deissmann, *Licht vom Osten* [4] (1923), p. 297. The *theologos* had his counterpart in a *Sebastologos* (Sebastos = Augustus).

forbidden by the Jewish law, though a prophet might predict that as Israel multiplied the believer might write upon his hand ' for Yahweh.' [1] At Alexandria Jews had been branded with an ivy leaf ' for Dionysus,' the patron deity of the Ptolemies, Ptolemy Philopator himself bearing it ; and in the days of Jesus Philo indignantly reproached apostates with branding such characters on their persons, and thus barring the way to retreat or repentance, for such marks would not wear out. No one unmarked should be able to buy or sell. From those who would not worship Cæsar all trade, and with it the means of life, should be withheld. It would be permitted only to those who possessed the mark, or the Beast's name or its number.

What was the name, or its number ? It was a secret, reserved for the initiated. But it is partially revealed. It is the number also of a man's name, 666.

What is the meaning of designating a man by his number ? Both Jews and Greeks had long employed the letters of their alphabets to denote numbers in units, tens, and hundreds. Moreover, number had something mysterious about it. The addition of the numerical values of the letters of a name produced a number ; the same number might be reached by other names, and this equality suggested a certain connexion between them. Coincidences of number were then accepted as equivalents, and one term might be substituted for the other. When Abraham pursued the invading kings, how was it that he had 318 followers (Gen. xiv. 14) ? The figure was that of the letters of his steward's name, Eleazar. This method provided the Scribes with an escape from the conclusion that in marrying an Ethiopian (Cushith) Moses had violated the Law. The total of her letters was 736. It was ingeniously discovered that the same figure was reached by the Hebrew ' fair of appearance.' Moses had really married a beautiful woman. Christians could play at the same game. A clever calculator noted that the Greek word *peristera*, the dove which symbolised the Spirit on its descent into Jesus at the Baptism,[2] had

[1] Lev. xix. 25 ; Isaiah xliv. 5.

[2] According to the best reading in Mark i. 10

the value 801. So had *alpha* (1) and *omega* (800). Jesus was thus explained esoterically as 'the Alpha and the Omega.' This method was well understood in the second century, and the first specimens of interpretation are due to Irenæus, working with the Greek alphabet. But his results have not found any general acceptance. Two considerations have determined the answer that is now most widely—though by no means universally—received.

The first concerns the identification of the head which was mortally wounded, but the death-stroke was afterwards healed (vv. 3, 12). This appears to be most satisfactorily explained (whether original or added) as a reference to the Emperor Nero, who killed himself to escape assassination in 68 A.D. The belief soon arose in the East that he was not really dead, but would return to resume the throne. In the very next year a pretender appeared, and in his name led a rebellion to recover his power.

The second consideration arises out of the question, 'which alphabet did the Prophet use, Hebrew or Greek?' Critics who think it likely that Jewish sources lie behind the picture of the two Beasts, naturally incline to the Hebrew, and it was pointed out (as early as 1831) that the Greek name Neron Kaisar in Hebrew letters would yield 666. A further circumstance seems to render this more certain. An early reading, known to Irenæus three-quarters of a century later, and still preserved in some MSS., fixes the figure at 616. If the Latin form Nero be adopted, without the final *n* of which the Hebrew value is 50, the number 666 is at once reduced to the alternative 616. It is obvious that the identification of the wounded head with Nero and the two figures reached through Hebrew letters support each other. Dr. Charles calls it 'the only satisfactory explanation.' [1]

[1] An interesting modification of this view, embodying the later belief (indicated in xvii. 8) that Nero though dead would still return, but from the abyss, was propounded by the late Prof. Johannes Weiss, in his Exposition in the *Schriften des N.Ts.* (1907), ii. p. 141. The number must contain the name of the reigning emperor, *i.e.* (according to general agreement) Domitian. That was not the secret of the chapter; any one could recognise the Beast in him. The mystery is that Domitian really is Nero, come to life again. The Christian must know,

But why should the Prophet, addressing the Churches in Greek, veil his secret in Hebrew? How many Jews were there among the faithful with the requisite 'understanding'? And why should Greek-speaking Christians employ the Latin form of the hated name rather than their own? Such considerations at least suggest further enquiry. The use of Greek letters in this way was widespread. Among the Graffiti scratched on the walls of Pompeii (before 79 A.D.) is the young man's confession (in Greek), 'I love her whose number is 545'![1] The method was valid all the way to Italy. A puzzling Greek sentence quoted in Suetonius's life of Nero has thus received a clever explanation. Nero, in Greek, has the value of 1005. It is followed by three Greek words meaning 'he killed his mother,' which represent the same figure. Nero is thus equated with Matricide.[2] Now 616 matches the letters of Gaius Cæsar, the Emperor Caligula. This fits the application of the original form of the description of the Beast without the clause of the death-stroke, which on other grounds may be legitimately regarded as an addition. Its drawback is that it does not explain the larger figure. Similar sports with Greek numbers are, however, found in inscriptions at Pergamum during the imperial age. In this explanation (which Dr. Deissmann has supported)[3] the verse must, of course, be older than the (probably interpolated) reference to Nero. But the figure can also be resolved into the detested claim to deity as *Kaisar theos*, which would suit either the earlier or the later Cæsar, and the reader of discernment could make his own application.[4]

therefore, what to expect. Nero was the type of murderers, Domitian will repeat his outrages. Let the Church prepare for martyrdoms. J. Weiss had already hinted this in his analysis of the Apocalypse in *Forschungen* iii. (1904), p. 92. There has been so much combination, so much adaptation of discrepant materials, there are so many traces of editorial manipulation in this book, that from the literary and historical point of view no conjecture of this kind can be rejected as impossible.

[1] Deissmann, *Licht vom Osten* [4], p. 237 f.

[2] F. Bücheler, *Rhein. Museum* (1906), p. 307. Cp. Deissmann, p. 238.

[3] First made more than a generation ago.

[4] Dr. Deissmann (p. 238) treats this as an original Jewish number (then why not in Hebrew?) afterwards expanded into 666 after the analogy of 888 for Jesus.

In these possibilities and uncertainties it only remains to point out that the problem is not concerned with one name only. The same number does double duty. It covers two names, the Beast's and a man's. If the man's name is Gaius Cæsar, or Nero Cæsar, or, more generally, Cæsar Divine, what was the Beast's? This opens the way to what is known as isopsephism, or identity founded on equality of numbers. Thus the Christian father, Jerome, mentions that the Gnostic teacher Basilides identified Mithras (in Greek spelling Meithras) with the course of the year because both were summed up as 365, and each in turn equalled the mysterious Deity Abraxas.[1] At this game let him play who will.

III

The prospect of death hangs over the faithful (xiii. 15). The 'great' like the Asiarchs might show their devotion to Cæsar by wearing medallions of the reigning emperor. 'Small' folk might possibly use a stamp like the red seal affixed to business documents. In the midst of this vast shadow of danger and din of persecution the Prophet suddenly hears the music of heaven. It is part of the profound religious significance of this book that the reader is made to feel that above the turmoil and perils of earth the celestial worship is never intermitted. Time and change pass; they are folded within the Eternal. Standing on Mount Zion is the Lamb, and with him a hundred and forty-four thousand, having his name, and the name of his Father, written on their foreheads (xiv. 1-5, cp. ii. 12).

The brief record of the vision offers many perplexities to the interpreter. Where is the Mount Zion and who are they that are gathered around the Lamb? When the Prophet hears a sound from heaven, like the majestic roll of waves, or a loud peal of thunder, and recognises the mingling of harp and song, who are the singers? A little study of the English text awakens suspicion of amal-

[1] Cumont, *Textes et Monuments*, ii. p. 19.

gamation.[1] Moreover, we have already met a hundred and forty-four thousand bearing the seal of the living God on their foreheads (vii. 3), assigned in equal numbers to the Twelve Tribes of Israel. Are those the same or different? And are they Jewish Christians, or is their race indifferent? The identification of them as celibates (ver. 4) limits them to men, and stands in the way of accepting them as representatives of the universal Church, which, of course, included women. But may not the identification be a later insertion? Among the various answers to these questions to be gathered from the critics no choice can be more than probable.

That the Messiah would stand on Mount Zion has many prophetic utterances to support it, and was a regular feature of apocalyptic hope.[2] But it may be doubted if this was the real Zion, even when it had risen above the rest of the mountains as a kind of beacon to the nations (Isaiah ii. 2). Is it not rather the ideal Zion, like the heavenly Olympus of the Greeks? The number may be a traditional eschatological expression for the redeemed, something like the Chinese phrase 'the hundred people' for the population of the Empire. They, then, are themselves the harpers, and they sing the new song. The symphony may well be louder than that of the four and twenty Elders (v. 9, 10). They follow the Lamb, their Shepherd-guide, as he leads them to the living waters (vii. 17). These were purchased from among men[3] as a gift to God; in their mouth was found no lie—they had maintained their Christian profession without wavering—and like the victims offered on the altar were

[1] Let the reader note the three clauses in ver. 4 beginning with 'these.' This is not straightforward writing, it is combination. So are the repeated phrases 'purchased out of the earth' and 'purchased from among men.' We may doubt which was original, we can hardly accept them both. The words 'and unto the Lamb' look like a careless addition; the Lamb was the purchaser (v. 9), and he did not buy the redeemed for himself.

[2] 4 Ezra xiii. 35.

[3] The generalised expression for 'every tribe and tongue and people and nation' (v. 9).

unblemished.[1] Only those of tried faithfulness could learn the new song. It is a vision of the rapture to come How soon will it be realised ? There are yet vast opportunities before the world, but there are also dread trials for the faithful, dread dooms for the wicked, before the end.

[1] This involves the excision of the clause implying that the hundred and forty-four thousand were all ascetics. There is no such limitation in the picture in vii. 9-17. The qualifications in ver. 5 have various Old Test. antecedents, *e.g.* Isai. liii. 9 (end), but they are needless after the prize has been won by the extremity of self-denial. The following of the Lamb is often interpreted of the *via dolorosa* to the cross. But the present tenses seem to imply the heavenly life.

LECTURE V

THE FALL OF ROME

THE 'goodly fellowship of the prophets' in the Churches of Asia, sharing common convictions, using a common language, resting on a common eschatological tradition, and animated by a common hope, must have often employed the same figures. In collecting his materials and throwing them into some kind of sequence the author of the Apocalypse had to bring them into his own scheme of the warfare between the Beast and the Lamb. They were apparently not always composed with that specific reference. The short series of episodes (xiv. 6-20) which follows the vision of the Hundred and Forty-four Thousand standing around the Lamb upon Mount Zion, exhibits some of these diversities.

I

Three angelic announcements are opened when 'another' angel is seen flying in mid-heaven, like the eagle which proclaimed three woes (viii. 13).[1] Both speak 'with a great voice,' and address all the dwellers on the earth. The angel is commissioned to proclaim 'everlasting good news,' announcing the new Age to be inaugurated by the Judgment for which the hour has at last arrived.[2]

[1] For other groups of three, cp. vv. 15, 17, 18, three plagues (ix. 18), three evil spirits (xvi. 13). The absence of any clear reference to a previous angel has apparently led to the omission of 'another' from some texts. J. Weiss ingeniously proposed to read 'eagle' for 'angel.'

[2] The 'coming' of the hour was a familiar Jewish phrase, and is repeatedly used in the Fourth Gospel, but in very different connexions. Cp. p. 378. The 'great day' had already been anticipated (vi. 17), and its consequences described (xi. 18).

The appeal is to every 'nation and tribe and tongue and people.' It is the summons of Christian universalism to the true worship. God is the maker of heaven and earth and sea, to whom alone should homage be paid. The majesty of the Creator was a constant theme in the devotion of the Church. The first words of the Scriptures cherished by Jew and Christian bore emphatic testimony to this manifestation of the Divine power and goodness. The Apostles at Jerusalem, Paul at Lystra, appeal to him that 'made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that in them is' (Acts iv. 24, xiv. 15). And as the Angel summoned the nations to adore the Creator of the universe—'fear' in the higher sense of reverence and awe included also trust and even love—the Seer had already witnessed Creation itself throughout the whole sphere of existence in heaven, on earth, beneath the earth, and on the sea, uniting in one vast harmony to ascribe 'blessing and honour and glory and dominion to him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb.'

But in this concord Rome has no place. To the angel's call she makes no response. She has intoxicated 'all the nations' with the wine of her false cults and her corrupting influence.[1] She is therefore already judged. As the watchman standing on his tower, six centuries before, had proclaimed the Divine verdict, 'Babylon is fallen, is fallen,' so now the same doom is announced by the second angel. To the prophetic eye that which is morally certain appears as already complete, and may consequently be described as having happened.[2] The third angel follows with an appalling picture of the fate of worshippers of the Beast and his image. They will be forced to drink the wine of God's wrath undiluted. Their fiery torments will be witnessed by the holy angels and

[1] So in xvii. 2. The condensed expression 'wine of the wrath of her fornication' can hardly be made to mean the wine of God's wrath for her fornication, and seems probably to have arisen from scribal recollection of the figure in Jer. xxv. 15, and the subsequent reference to the 'wine of God's wrath,' ver. 10. Cp. Charles, ii. 15. Bousset and Moffatt suggest 'passion' for 'wrath,' its maddening power.

[2] This had the significant result that Hebrew often employed the perfect tense in prophetic speech to describe future events. Isai. xxi. 9.

even the Lamb himself. In hideous contrast with the adoring Cherubs (iv. 8) they will have no rest day or night. As there will be no intermission of pain, so there will be no end ; the smoke of the penal flame will go up for ever and ever. There might be a new heaven and a new earth, but the old hell is apparently indestructible ! Religious horror at insults to the sole sovereignty of God, abhorrence of gross vices, anger at persecution, combine to prompt these threats. They are designed to strengthen the believer in the crisis of trial, by warning him of the everlasting suffering which awaits him if he yields. At any hour he might be required to confront the test. He lived in a state of tension which was never relaxed. Obedience to God's commands and loyalty to his faith in Jesus might suddenly bring him face to face with death. The Christian's duty was unflinching endurance.

Into this gloom of mortal peril came a shaft of light. A heavenly voice was heard from on high bidding the Prophet record the message which would put to flight all dread. Death had many aspects, and among the cultivated, afflicted with world-weariness, or objects of imperial suspicion, the path of escape lay through suicide to extinction. With unsurpassed boldness the elder Pliny actually dared to pity God for not himself possessing the best of his gifts to mortals—the power to take his own life. To the believer, on the other hand, his religion was precious because it had brought incorruption to light. Those who had learned to live in Christ could not be afraid to die in Christ. Jewish piety had already promised seven orders of rest for the faithful, the fourth being that ' they understand the rest which, being gathered in their chambers, they now enjoy with great quietness, guarded by angels,' and the seventh that ' they hasten to behold the face of him whom in their lifetime they served, and from whom they shall receive their reward in glory.' [1] These hopes were strengthened by the Gospel and nerved the expectant martyr to steadfastness. Between the two possible renderings of the celestial promise—' Blessed from henceforth are those who die in

[1] 4 Ezra vii. 90-98.

the Lord,' and 'Blessed are those who from henceforth die in the Lord'—there is no intrinsic difference. The first is not intended to exclude those already dead from blessing; the second encourages the saints to meet even universal martyrdom (xiii. 15) with confidence. To this faith the Spirit responds with the assurance that while they rest from the toils of the Christian life, its strife and its victories, their works shall follow them. The Jewish Apocalyptist recognised 'a treasure of works laid up with the Most High,' but did not expect that it would be showed to the saint till the last times.[1] Contemporary piety, however, picturesquely represented a man's virtues as his escort into the next life. 'In the hour of his decease,' said Rabbi Jose ben Qisma, 'not silver, nor gold, nor goodly stones, and pearls accompany the man, but Torah and good works alone.'[2] The Hindu poet of the Great Epic taught that the path to the scene of judgment in the hall of the King of Righteousness is traversed alone without relative or friend; the voyager has no companion but his own good or evil deeds.[3] Persian theology conceived such deeds embodied in the shape of a young maiden, fair, bright, white-armed, strong, or of a hideous old hag, gaping, bandy-legged, lean-hipped, who met the soul at the end of the third night after death, and led him to the Good Thought paradise or the Evil Thought hell.[4] The Pamphylian Er, in Plato's heroic tale, sees the just coming away from the judges with the symbols of their deeds in front of them, the sinners with corresponding tokens fastened to their backs.[5] So in the great ethical religions of the ancient world did conscience seek to vindicate its moral order. The Seer of the Apocalypse could cherish the belief that every man would be judged according to his works without asking how it could be combined with registration 'in the book of life from the foundation of the world' (xvii. 18).

[1] 4 Ezra vii. 77; cp. Apoc. Bar. xiv. 12.

[2] Taylor, *Sayings of the Jewish Fathers* (1877), p. 117 (Pereq R. Meir, 9). Cp. Bacher, *Aggada der Tannaiten* [2] (1903), i. p. 399.

[3] *Mahābh.* xii. 322, 50 ff.

[4] *Sacred Books of the East*, xxiii. pp. 316-319. [5] Rep. x. 614 C.

After the declaration that the hour of judgment had arrived (ver. 7) two sketches of it are appended, founded on the familiar agricultural figures of harvest and vintage. So the prophet Joel had combined them (iii. 13) :

> ' Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe ;
> Come, tread ye, for the wine-press is full.'

The juxtaposition of the two pictures, the machinery of angelic instruction, and the abrupt close of the second with its ghastly details of blood, have puzzled all commentators. It has been supposed that the first referred to the ingathering of the good, and the second to the punishment of the wicked ; or again that the second was limited specifically to Israel (the ' city ' being Jerusalem), while the Gentile peoples were thus included in the first. Dr. Charles has sought relief by eliminating vv. 15-17 as a ' stupid interpolation,' without, however, offering a reason for such an insertion. In our ignorance of the materials which John employed, whether written or traditional, speculation is baffled and useless. The two scenes are hung side by side without explanation, and in their presentation of the agency of judgment differ widely from details elsewhere. The reaper in the first is neither God nor Christ, but one ' like unto a son of man.' He sits upon a radiant cloud, wearing a crown of royalty, with a sharp sickle in his hand. The mysterious figure in human form who appears in Daniel's vision amid the clouds of heaven (vii. 13) after the four beasts have been sentenced, is not invested with the prerogative of judgeship, but from the days of Enoch this has been assigned to him. Here, in spite of the kingly symbol on his head, he cannot act until he is instructed by ' another angel ' who brings a command from Deity within the heavenly temple. He belongs, himself, therefore, it would seem, to the angelic host. So Enoch had depicted him, ' I saw another being (the Son of Man) whose countenance had the appearance of a man, and his face was full of graciousness, like one of the holy angels ' (xlvi. 1). ' The hour to reap,' he is told, ' is come,' the sickle is flung down upon the earth, and the earth is reaped. A single phrase

covers the judgment of humanity, but of the process or its issue there is no word.

In the companion picture the heavenly minister of God's justice is frankly designated 'another angel.' He issues from the temple where he has been entrusted with a sharp sickle. But though thus equipped he must wait till he is bidden to gather the clusters of the earth's spreading vine. It is the angel of fire—the element of destruction, but also of purification—who is the messenger from the sanctuary. The sickle is again cast on to the earth, and the vintage of humanity is thrown into the winepress of the wrath of God. The blood-bath is terrific. The sketch apparently rests on the ancient prophetic anticipation of a gathering of the nations such as Joel or Zechariah had imagined against Jerusalem. Their onset is defeated, and a deluge of blood spreads for 1600 stadia, the length of Palestine, over hill and vale. Critics have vainly sought to explain the dreadful figure, submerging the whole land in gore. It is enough to note that in the mutual destruction of those who 'work unrighteousness and help oppression' Enoch had predicted that 'the horse shall walk up to the breast in the blood of sinners, and the chariot shall be submerged to its height' (c. 3). These duplicates can hardly be of Christian origin though they are now set in a Christian context. What process of amalgamation brought them into their present shape we cannot tell. That they should be thus placed side by side without any definite connexion with preceding events, when one great scene of the world's close has been already described (xi. 15-18) and another has yet to come, is significant of the author's anxiety to embrace as much as possible of current eschatological material, and his indifference to chronological succession.

II

In the episodes just briefly discussed neither Christ nor the Beast has been named, and Rome and her corruptions have been merged in the general mass. But in the dooms which follow (xv.-xviii.) Rome becomes the central figure.

The end so often anticipated has yet to come. The 'Wrath' which will precede the actual Judgment is still incomplete. Seven more plagues are needed to fulfil its work. In token of their solemn function as the administrators of God's penal dooms, they are placed by a kind of consecration in the hands of seven angels of exalted rank. Robed in shining linen and girt with golden girdles they issue from the temple, and receive them in seven golden bowls, full of the wrath of the Everlasting God, from one of the four Cherubs. The gift is apparently made within the temple, which is then filled with smoke from the divine Glory.[1] For this final demonstration, carrying with it a last opportunity of repentance, a title has been editorially fixed in xv. 1. But the real vision is introduced by the glowing picture of the gathering of the martyrs beside the glassy sea on the floor of the firmament, irradiated apparently by the stellar fires. They have come victorious from the persecution of the Beast and his image, and to the music of their harps sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb. As only one hymn is quoted, critics employ their subtlety in finding reasons why one or other name should be eliminated. Dr. Charles reminds us that the daily recitation of the Jewish confession of faith, 'Hear ye, Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One,' ended with a benediction containing a reference to the triumphant ode (Exod. xv.), 'A new song did they that were delivered sing to thy name by the sea shore.'[2] This might have early become a Christian symbol of victory over the oppressor, to which Church devotion might have added a pendant. The language of the hymn is hardly more than a mosaic of pious utterances from the 'Praises of Israel,' without any distinctively Christian colouring. Even its universalism does not pass beyond the range of the Psalms. Convinced by God's righteous acts, all nations will come and worship before him. Of that unity of all mankind in Christ so emphati-

[1] The Cherub's relation to the throne (iv. 6) is obscure; in presenting the bowls to the angels was he detached for independent action, and was the throne inside or outside the temple? The apocalyptist's point of view does not seem consistently maintained.

[2] G. H. Box in *Enc. Bibl.* iv. col. 4954.

cally affirmed by the Apostle Paul there is no hint. And the traditional hope of uniting mankind in a common fellowship of faith is only feebly heard on earth amid the passionate hatred of the idolators and the dreadful torments predicted for them. This unreconciled antagonism is one of the marked religious features of the whole book. Neither extreme can be realised without the other, and yet they are incompatible together. Meantime the temple is so filled with smoke from the majesty and power of God that none can enter it. God's burning anger is so fierce and withal so pure that he is unapproachable till the punishments inflicted by his wrath have been fulfilled.

The plagues of the Seven Bowls (xvi.) are in part identical, as has been long noted, with those of the Seven Trumpets. Set the two side by side and you will see their correspondences. Both represent the sea as turned into blood in the second place; the rivers and springs are rendered undrinkable in the third; while both conclude with lightnings and thunder-claps, earthquake and hail. The significance of the repetitions is not apparent. If the first of such chastisements failed to persuade or convict, would their recurrence be more effectual? The islands had disappeared before, and the mountains were shattered from their foundations at the opening of the sixth seal. The same convulsions follow again; the islands flee away and the mountains are seen no more. Behind the two series of catastrophes are the Egyptian plagues which provided a common store of apocalyptic terrors. These are applied afresh against the worshippers of the Beast. They it was who poured out the blood of saints and prophets, and as the streams are turned to blood the angel of the waters (counterpart of the angel of fire, xiv. 18) sees in the change the retributive action of God's holiness; as they have shed the blood of others, they deserve to drink blood themselves. Even the altar becomes vocal (ver. 7), and chimes in with assenting recognition of God's truth and righteousness as judge. No Christians are named for exemption. Persecution has apparently done its work, and there are none left.

Far in the East the Parthian kings are gathering, and, to facilitate their attack, as the sixth bowl is emptied the Euphrates is dried up. The antecedents of the grotesque descriptions of three unclean spirits like frogs issuing from the mouths of the Dragon (out of sight since xiii. 2), the Beast, and the False Prophet, are unknown. Neither the plague of frogs in Egypt nor the Persian abhorrence of frogs (cited by Moffatt from the Zend Avesta) avails to explain them. They seem to be suggested by some folk-tale of wizardry. Their function here is to use the expected Parthian invasion to incite the kings of the whole world to assemble for the war of God's 'great Day.'[1] The scene of the conflict is at Mount Magedon. Where, then, was this mountain? The Greek spelling is commonly identified with Megiddo, the little hill-town celebrated in the Song of Deborah (Judges v.) over the defeat of Sisera and the Canaanite kings. It stood over the southern approach to the great plain of Jezreel, where Josiah had fallen in battle with the invading troops of Pharaoh Necho. Though no mountain is ever mentioned in association with it, the range behind it might conceivably have borne its name and served as an apocalyptic symbol for the scene of the last great conflict predicted by Ezekiel on the mountains of Israel. In this uncertainty conjecture has floated suggestions more uncertain still concerning some mythic gathering of hostile powers, such as the concourse of fallen angels on Mount Hermon described by Enoch (vi. 6), which might have been adapted to a locality familiar to the author. But when Dr. Charles warns us that 'everything connected with the text and meaning of the phrase' is doubtful, the guesses even of the learned are of no avail. The sequel of the strife is not narrated. The passage is fragmentary, and the reader is left to determine time, place, and result, for himself. The Seer hurries on to the discharge of the seventh Bowl. Islands and mountains disappear; the cities of the nations fall and the 'great city' is shattered

[1] The Revisers have marked ver. 15 as an intrusion. It belongs to the language of the opening letters, cp. iii. 3 or 18. Loisy, however, pleads that the author interpolates himself.

into three parts by an earthquake of unexampled violence. Is this Jerusalem? xi. 8 (so, for instance, Moffatt).[1] It had already been smitten, a tenth part destroyed, and seven thousand persons killed. In their terror the survivors had given glory to the God of heaven. Did the lesson require repetition? The other 'great city' is Babylon, whose fate is reserved in God's remembrance for a future manifestation of his wrath (xviii.). It seems probable, therefore, that the clause must be regarded as one of the numerous additions due to undiscerning scribes.[2] The earthquake is accompanied by a fearful plague of hail (fourth in the Egyptian series), in which each stone weighed a talent. Among local varieties of coinage and metal, and different talents for different substances, it is impossible to fix the Seer's meaning. Dr. Charles estimates the talent between 108 and 130 lbs. Prof. Gardner suggests that a 'talent' originally meant a man's load, 'the apocalyptic writer used the term quite vaguely, much as we might use the word *ton*.' Well might it be said that 'the plague thereof was exceeding great.' But men only blasphemed the more.

III

The way is now prepared for the judgment on Rome (xvii.-xviii.). It is introduced by a new vision, to which the Seer is conducted by one of the great angels in charge of the seven plagues. The significance of the vision is enhanced by the importance of the guide. But the record of it is in strange confusion. The Beast to whom the Dragon committed his power (xiii. 2) reappears, but in a fresh scene, and he apparently possesses more than one character. The difficulties of interpretation suggest that the original narrative has been expanded by combination with material from another source, and—if the foundation was (as many scholars have suggested) Jewish and Hebrew

[1] In that case the prophecy must be earlier than A.D. 70.

[2] Dr. Charles notes in confirmation a peculiarity in the order of the words. How far reliance can always be placed on small stylistic variations is still matter of uncertainty.

—it has been further adapted by the Christian editor.[1] Such processes are familiar enough in the literary history both of Israel and the early Church. In the present instance the paucity of data may make their separation more difficult, but the discrepancies of detail are sufficiently clear to render some such conclusion inevitable.

The Seer is carried away in Spirit into a wilderness, where he sees a scarlet-coloured Beast. His seven heads and ten horns and names of blasphemy identify him with the Beast whom he had formerly seen come up out of the sea (xiii. 1). His brilliant hue differs from the red blood-thirstiness of the Dragon (xii. 3), it denotes the splendour of wealth and luxury. Upon his back a woman is seated, robed in purple and scarlet, blazing with gold and jewels. She is the symbol of imperial Rome, sitting like Babylon of old upon many waters (vv. 1, 18, Jer. li. 13). The picture of her sovereignty, her sumptuous arrogance, the wantonness of her pride, recalls the figure of the great Lady of the Euphrates (Isaiah xlvii). She is not seen on her own throne over the vast territories bordering her streams, she is presented in magnificent isolation in the wilderness in striking contrast to the hunted Lady of the Church (xii). The hateful epithet flung by Isaiah against Tyre (xxiii. 17) or against Nineveh by Nahum (iii. 4) is inscribed upon her forehead. It is a 'mystery,' to be understood in the spirit of prophetic speech (xi. 8), the antithesis to the names of the Lamb and of his Father written upon the foreheads of the hundred and forty-four thousand before the throne. For she holds in her hand a golden cup full of abominations, the wine of her idolatries and corruptions which she gave kings to drink, counterpart of the wine-cup of God's wrath (xiv. 10). All the false Oriental cults, rivals of the Gospel, were gathered under her protection, and she was the 'mother' of them

[1] Thus Dr. Charles is in substantial agreement with Wellhausen (1907) in recognising the presence of two documents the first lying behind vv. 1-10, 18, and probably continued in xviii, the second embedded in 11-17. Each has received additions and modifications implying adjustment to changed historical situations. On grounds of linguistic usage the oldest is assigned to a Jewish source, the later to a Greek.

all. Hardly, indeed, can she keep her seat, for she is drunk with blood, and the discrimination between the blood of the saints and the blood of the martyrs of Jesus suggests that the latter is a Christian addition by the adapter, the 'saints' having been originally the Jews who perished in the massacre after the capture of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

The Seer's wonder at her appearance leads to a promise from the angel to explain the mystery of the amazing pair, the Woman and the Beast. The identification of the Woman, however, in our present text is postponed to the end of his interpretation (ver. 18) as the last item needing attention. It might conceivably have been placed at the beginning, but in the manipulation of the author's materials the superior importance and interest of the Beast secures precedence for him. 'He was, and is not,' in mortal contrast to Him 'who was and is,' unchanging in eternal Being. Yet he, too, is about to come, but it will be 'up out of the abyss,' with only a temporary advent, to oppose Him who was dead but is alive for evermore. Well may the spectators on earth whose names are not enrolled in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, stand in wondering awe when they see his reappearance. Here the perplexing figure, seven-headed, ten-horned, is suddenly identified with a single person. A similar identification was made at the close of his first presentation (xiii. 18), where the number seemed to point to the Emperor Nero. But why should he be represented as coming up from the abyss? The answer must be for a moment deferred. It must be noted meanwhile that ver. 8 is interposed between the angel's promise and its fulfilment (ver. 9), 'here is the mind which hath wisdom' (cp. xiii. 18). The explanation is two-fold, and the terms are wholly inconsistent, united only by the favourite apocalyptic number seven. The first is concerned with the seat of the 'great city' (ver. 18) on her seven hills; the second with seven kings. Of the former nothing more is said. It seems as if the numerical parallelism had caught the fancy of some scribe who noted 'seven mountains' in his margin, and the note was

embodied by a later copyist into the text.[1] The real meaning must be sought in what follows, 'they are seven kings.' As it is said that five have fallen, and one is, it is plain that they represent a succession, and if the local detail be accepted as original they are at once placed in Rome. Who, then, are the seven kings? The title was the customary one in the East for the emperors. But from what point is the imperial series reckoned? Contemporary apocalyptic (4 Ezra iv), Josephus for the Jews, and Suetonius for the Romans, conceived the empire to start with Julius Cæsar. Tacitus, on the other hand, began with Augustus. This is, on the whole, the most generally-accepted view.[2] How far does it explain the expectations of our text?

Five are said to have fallen, from Augustus to Nero.

[1] It is possible, however, that as the identification of the Woman is deferred, the writer wished to give a preliminary hint of her significance by identifying her actual geographical home instead of simply exhibiting her in the wilderness. The same figure might serve two purposes.

[2] This view and the very original interpretation by Dr. C. H. Turner, *Studies in Early Church History* (1912), p. 217, may be thus presented.

Augustus -- -	B.C. 27-14 A.D.	Nero - -	B.C. 54-68
Tiberius - -	A.D. 14-37	Galba	
Gaius (Caligula) -	37-41	Otho } -	68-69
Claudius - -	41-54	Vitellius	
Nero - - -	54-68	Vespasian -	69-79
Vespasian - -	69-79	Titus - -	79-81
Titus - - -	79-81	Domitian -	81-96
Domitian - -	81-96	Nero - -	—

Dr. Turner thus includes the three who passed across the imperial stage in a few months after Nero, and are not generally reckoned except as usurpers.

Victorinus (Bishop of Pettau in the modern Styria), in his commentary on the Apocalypse (ed. Haussleiter, 1916, *Corp. Scriptorum Eccles. Latin.* p. 118), supposes the book to be written under Domitian. The five who have fallen are Titus, Vespasian, Otho, Vitellius and Galba. 'One is,' viz. Domitian, another is not yet come, viz. Nerva, whose reign fulfilled the prophecy of brevity (96-98). Nero then follows as the eighth, and his description as 'one of the seven' is lamely explained by the statement that he reigned before them.

Turner, p. 217: 'Victorinus felt no difficulty in reckoning back from Domitian in the sixth through Titus, Vespasian, Vitellius, and Otho, to Galba as the first. This calculation has the drawback that it does not really include Nero among the seven, and we prefer to suppose that St. John omits one of the three ephemeral emperors as not fully recognised in the East and makes Nero both the first and the eighth. In commencing the seven heads of the anti-Christian power with Nero rather than with Julius or Augustus the seer is faithful to the real meaning of the facts.'

One is on the throne, Vespasian. He will be followed by another, whose reign, however, will be short. If this interpretation of ver. 8 be admitted, the natural inference is that the original vision was dated in the reign of Vespasian. The next reign, it was anticipated, would not last long. Was this because it was known that the health of Titus, who would succeed to the throne, was already impaired? Or because of the possible success of intrigues on the part of his brother Domitian? The angel's language points in a different direction. The brief duration is explained by the providential scheme, the apocalyptic 'must,' which is hastening the Judgment and the beginning of the Coming Age. But while the seventh emperor is thus expected to bring the imperial succession to a close, ver. 11 suddenly introduces an eighth, the Beast that was and is not, and he is described in ver. 8, with the additional information that he is himself one of the seven. This is the mysterious personality who is to come up out of the abyss (ver. 8). He is a member of the imperial series, who lived and died and is to return from the world below. What is the meaning of these riddles? How are they to be combined with the previous statement that one of the heads of the Beast seemed to have been fatally wounded, but the deadly stroke was healed (xiii. 3)? The answer is found in the well-known beliefs about Nero, which assumed two successive forms, reflected in the various allusions in the two visions. Their development has been fully analysed by Dr. Charles,[1] and may be summarised as follows.

The first belief which was widely spread through the East declared that Nero was not really dead. How it arose we do not clearly know, but within a year a pseudo-Nero succeeded in raising forces in Asia Minor and Greece. The attempt of A.D. 69 was repeated on the Euphrates more than ten years later, when a second pretender was acknowledged by the Parthian King Artabanus. Yet a third claimant appeared in 88, twenty years after the suicide in Rome, and from the Parthian vantage-ground threatened the Roman Empire. The fourth book of the

[1] *Commentary*, ii. p. 80 ff.

Sibylline verses, written soon after 79, contains the same expectation of his reappearance, and Zahn and Bousset have shown how the poet associated it (book V.) with a denunciation of Babylon, and a prophecy of the rebuilding of Jerusalem. This is the situation implied in the healing of the stricken head (xiii. 3), and the contraction of the Beast to one 'of the seven' (xvii. 11). But it will be observed that the last clause of this verse repeats the previous statement (ver. 8).[1] There the Beast appears in a new character. He does not come from the East at the head of Parthian hosts; he rises out of the abyss. This is no longer a living Nero who never died but was mysteriously conveyed away, and issued from his Eastern retreat to regain his empire; it is a Nero *redivivus*, who has ascended from the realms below. To this expectation, modified probably by the execution of the impersonator who was surrendered to the Romans under Domitian, the later Sibyl (under Hadrian) bears witness. Nero was dead, but would come back from Hades as a demonic being, armed with the powers of the underworld, to play the part of Antichrist, and doomed consequently to perdition. For this return Dr. Turner's scheme of emperors provides an eighth for Nero. Apparently, however, the apocalyptist regards him as *already* 'himself also an eighth.' The 'is not' of the former description has become 'is,'—not 'will be.' To the writer his succession to the seven is not a future apprehension, it is a present fact. He is not contemplating a posthumous existence among the shades, but a contemporary occupant of the throne. In the usual reckoning from Augustus the eighth place is filled by Domitian. Can it be, then, that Domitian is really Nero again incarnate? Such is the bold conclusion which some eminent scholars, such as Pfleiderer and M'Giffert, have drawn from these perplexities. The emphasis laid on the sufferings of the Christians (xvii. 6, xviii. 20, 24) finds here some explanation.[2] Like all

[1] Some critics excise it as a gloss.

[2] In the Ascension of Isaiah iv. 2-4 the arrangement is different. Beliar will descend from the firmament in the likeness of a man, a lawless king, the slayer of his mother, who will persecute the plant which the Twelve Apostles have planted. Cp. p. 138[1].

interpretations this is in its turn open to difficulties, but it seems on the whole to reconcile most completely the apparent contradictions of the text.

The sequel (vv. 12-18) is again composite, and its elements are plainly disordered. The ten horns of the Beast are identified with ten kings, who receive power with the Beast for one apocalyptic hour. They unite their forces with him--for what purpose ? War with the Lamb himself, the Lord of lords and King of kings, who overcomes them with the host of his followers, the called, elect, and faithful. But after the prediction of their overthrow the angel offers a new explanation. The ten horns of the Beast attack the harlot. The Beast on which she sat so proudly is now her enemy, strips off her robe, devours her flesh, and consumes her utterly with fire. Here the Beast is no impersonation of either city or empire ; he is the leader of a foreign enterprise to regain his power. It is divinely guided. The surprising unanimity of the ten kings is part of God's purpose (vv. 13 and 17, now separated, plainly belong together). They are the instruments of judgment on Rome. It is obvious that they cannot accomplish this after their defeat by the Lamb. That is a conflict of superhuman powers, when the forces of hell challenge the might of heaven, and is reserved for the appointed end of the Beast's authority (xix. 19). Many explanations have been offered of the ten kings. They have been identified with the administrators of the ten provinces allotted to the Senate whose proconsuls changed from year to year, or with the officials and petty princes of Asia Minor. Looking into the distant future, Dr. Swete conceived them to appear in the last days of the Roman Empire. Arising out of the Empire itself like horns from a beast's head, they would turn their arms against Rome, and bring about her downfall. Such anticipations are wholly inconsistent with the language of immediacy pervading this book of prophecy. The invasions led by Attila or Genseric in no way fulfil the expectations of the Seer. The ' fall of Rome ' was not an event like that of Jerusalem. It was a historical process lasting for centuries. If a contemporary explanation be

sought, it is not natural to suppose that agents or representatives of the imperial government would unite in an onslaught on the Mother-city. With more probability the ten kings (who have no kingdoms) might be found among the Parthian princes who might rejoin the returning Nero to restore him by force, and carve out dominions for themselves as the price of their aid. It seems, however, more likely that they are in no way personal like the succession of the seven heads, but belong to the apocalyptic tradition founded on Daniel's figure, unknown forms to fill out the picture.

It is thus possible that this vision has passed through various stages of elaboration. At its base, in the opinion of many eminent critics, in this country and abroad, lies a Jewish prophecy against Rome, possibly written as early as Caligula, but more probably under Vespasian. Under his reign it was edited on Christian lines with the direct identification of the Beast with Nero, in the expectation of his reappearance from the East. When that faded and it was realised that he was actually dead, he could only re-enter life by an ascension from the underworld. Then he was temporarily incarnated in Domitian, but the imperial monster expanded into the leader of all the powers of evil, and was ultimately destined to lead his forces against the Lamb, whose victory would hurl him back into the abyss from which he came. Meantime Rome, in the hands of the over-ruling Providence, would have been destroyed.

IV

The judgment on the 'great city' follows. So tremendous an event can only be announced by exceptional authority. A splendid angel, invested with great power, descends from the sky, illuminating the whole scene with his radiance. In mighty tones he proclaims the fall of the imperial criminal. She is given over to the demons and unclean spirits, and every unclean and hateful bird. The ode of doom is pronounced by another heavenly voice, summoning God's people to quit her fellowship and escape

her plagues. The language is steeped in the taunt-songs hurled against Tyre and Babylon in ancient prophecy, and is generally referred to an underlying Jewish composition. Three groups of mourners chant the dreadful woe, the kings who lived wantonly with her, the merchants who were enriched by her, and the mariners who gathered her wealth. They gaze on the flames as all the accumulations of luxury go up in smoke, from the great conflagration (has it been lighted by Nero *redivivus*?), when one hour destroys the labour of generations. And suddenly the Christian editor breaks in (ver. 20) with a call to heaven itself to rejoice, where saints and apostles and prophets, the martyred dead (ver. 24), are gathered, who have waited long but are vindicated at last. The magnificent rhetoric veils the hatred which finds such impassioned satisfaction in Rome's terrific destruction. Not all her international service, not the peace which she maintained from the Persian Gulf to the shores of the Atlantic, from the cataracts of the Nile to the cliffs of Britain—not the majesty of equal laws binding many peoples into one citizenship—not her roads and her harbours and all the instruments of intercourse promoting the unity of social order—not her schools and universities, her education and culture, could avail to save her. Rome has made war on Christ and she must perish.

Once more loud anthems are heard on high. With the joyous cry of the Psalmist, 'Hallelujah,' already familiar in the Synagogue but heard here only in the New Testament, the mighty throng of the angels proclaim God's judgments to be right and true (xix. 1-6). The question of the martyrs beneath the altar (vi. 10) is answered at last. God has avenged the blood of his servants. With fierce triumph they announce the everlasting condemnation of the guilty city. For 'ages of ages' the smoke of her burning shall never cease. In stern assent the four and twenty Elders and the four Cherubs in closest proximity to the throne prostrate themselves in worship and respond 'Amen.' The throne itself becomes vocal like the golden altar (ix. 13), and summons all God's servants, small and great (xi. 18), to join the hymn of praise. And with the

sound of many waters and mighty thunders they join in the ancient acclamation, 'Hallelujah, for the Lord our God, the Almighty, hath become king.'[1] It is time to 'rejoice and be exceeding glad' (Ps. cxviii. 24, Matt. v. 12) for 'the marriage of the Lamb is come, and the bride hath made herself ready.' Robed in fine linen (editorially explained as the righteous acts of the saints) she awaits the immortal hour, and an unknown speaker bids the Seer record the blessing on the guests invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

A divine marriage was an ancient symbol, wide-spread through the East. Early Babylonian ritual celebrated an annual festival on New Year's Day of the union of the goddess Bau, mother of the human race, chief daughter of the heaven-god, with the god Ningirsu, a solar deity. In later theological transformations this was transferred to another divine pair, Marduk, the victor over the powers of winter, darkness and death, and his consort Sarpanitu, on the first of Nisan, when the New Year began in the spring.[2] A similar union under the name of 'sacred marriage' was celebrated yearly in many parts of Greece between Zeus and Hera,[3] often explained as the symbol of the life-giving energies of heaven and earth. In the prophetic thought it became the personalised expression of the relation of Yahweh to a purified Israel. Did not Hosea promise that he would betroth his people to himself for ever, in righteousness and judgment, in loving-kindness and in mercies and in faithfulness—the fullest assurance of a conjugal union (ii. 19, 20)? So the idea still found expression in the teaching of the Synagogue. God had come from Sinai, it was said, to receive the Israelites, as the bridegroom went forth to meet the bride.[4]

[1] Cp. xi. 17. The language is that of Ps. xcvii. 1, and the so-called Psalms of the Accession, Is. lii. 7, commemorating the conquest of Babylon and the Lord's return to Zion.

[2] Jastrow, *Rel. of Babylonia and Assyria* (1898), pp. 59, 677 f.

[3] Farnell, *Cults of Greece*, i. p. 184.

[4] *Mechilta*, on Ex. xix. 17, tr. Winter and Wünsche (1909), p. 202. Cp. the parable in Midrash on Exod. (tr. Wünsche, 1882), p. 129, where this world is only betrothed, but in the days of the Messiah will be married.

So in the Gospel parable did the marriage-feast stand for the Messiah's reign (Matt. xxii. 1-13). Adapted by the Church the symbol was naturally attached to Christ, but in eschatologic thought the union was not completed till the Advent of the Messiah. At last the hour has arrived. But before the great celebration the Beast, the False Prophet, and the Dragon must be mastered and confined, and the way will then be open for the triumph of the saints.[1]

[1] The second speech of the angel is under suspicion of being an editorial adaptation from xxii. 6, 8-9 ; Cp. Charles, ii. p. 128.

LECTURE VI

THE JUDGMENT AND THE NEW JERUSALEM

The brief period of twelve hundred and sixty days assigned for the sojourn of the Heavenly Woman in the wilderness (xii. 6), while her seed were being persecuted, has passed altogether out of sight in the great events which followed. All chronological limits have been ignored in the anticipations of judgment, the final series of plagues, the sudden introduction of a historical situation (xvii. 10, 11), the terrific overthrow of Rome by the Beast and his mysterious allies, and their expected onset against the Lamb and the host of his chosen and faithful (xvii. 14). Rome has fallen, though the agent of her destruction is never named, and with a roar like that of ocean or the reverberation of mighty thunders a great multitude proclaims that the Lord God, the Almighty, has become king. The marriage feast of the Lamb has been announced, ' and his wife hath made herself ready.' But before the guests can assemble a supper of a very different kind must first be served.

I

Heaven itself opens. This is no mere door, from which the Seer may observe the persons and events within. The firmament itself makes way for whole armies, headed by a white horse, on whom one sits (like the occupant of the throne, iv. 2, 3) called ' Faithful and True ' (cp. iii. 14). He is empowered both to judge and to make war, and the double function will be exercised in righteousness. With

eyes of flame (i. 14) and diadems apparently laid one above another on his head, his vesture is sprinkled with blood like that of the divine warrior returning from Edom (Is. lxiii. 1-3). It is needless to ask whose blood. There has been as yet no battle. The armies who follow on their white horses are clothed only in fine linen, white and pure. The leader's garment is but an ancient symbol of his dread task, he is to tread the wine-press of the fierceness of God's Wrath. This terror brooded over the whole age. Enoch had threatened unbelievers with the Wrath of the Lord of Spirits, and depicted his sword as drunk with blood (lxii. 12, lxiii. 11). It had inspired the piercing question of the Baptist, 'Ye viper's brood, who hath warned you to flee from the coming Wrath?' Paul sped over land and sea to preach 'Jesus who delivers us from the coming Wrath' (1 Thess. i. 10). 'These are the last times,' pleads Ignatius on his way to martyrdom, a decade or two after John's prophecy, 'fear the coming Wrath' (Ephes. xi. 1); had not John already anticipated that the horses should walk up to their bridles in blood (xiv. 20)? In such fierce figures did the sternness of Jewish hatred against idolatry and its associated sins express itself. The rider's mouth is armed with a sharp sword, symbol of the speech of doom. But he is to do more than pronounce sentence. As was predicted of the Wonder-Child born of the Heavenly Woman, he is to rule the nations with a rod of iron. With such a rod, said the Psalmist in Solomon's name (xvii. 26), should the King of David's line thrust out the sinners from the inheritance and break their substance like a potter's vessel. In the heavenly world Enoch proclaimed that when God's chosen was seated on the throne of his glory, the word of his mouth should slay all the sinners (lxii. 2). Baruch was divinely told that when the principate of the Messiah was revealed the hosts of Rome should be rooted out, and their last leader taken to Mount Zion to be convicted of his impieties and put to death (xxxix.-xl.). When Ezra saw a man coming up from the sea, the Most High bade him understand that it was his own Son who without spear or any instrument of war would destroy the multitude which came to fight against

him, and from the summit of Zion would rebuke the nations for their wickedness, and destroy them without labour by the law (4 Ezra xiii. 25-38). Out of such expectations came the picture of the white-horsed Rider and his host drawn by the Christian Seer, advancing to overthrow the persecutors and secure the triumph of the saints. It is his last great act of testimony to truth and justice. Not only is he now 'Faithful and True' as of yore, upon his thigh (as in the case of famous statues) is inscribed the august title 'King of kings, and Lord of lords.' But that is not all. Somewhere upon his person, mysteriously veiled, is written a name which none knows but himself (xix. 12). Is it the new name which is to be disclosed hereafter (iii. 12)? It is apparently the secret of his power. It conferred hidden energies and might not be divulged, like the name in Michael's keeping (Enoch lxix. 14) through which the elements of the universe were wrought into shape, and heaven and earth and sea were made fast.[1] Does the writer mean to disclose it when he tells us that the Rider was also called God's Word? Is this only the impersonation of the ancient prophetic message? Or, as others have thought, the Jewish Memra, which appears in the Targums as the instrument of the judicial will of God? Most interpreters connect it with the language of the Fourth Evangelist (i. 1). But how can we combine the Logos or Eternal Thought of God, revealing itself in light and life, in grace and truth, with the blood-bespattered warrior? Not even Wisdom's figure of God's all-powerful Word leaping from the royal thrones of heaven as a stern warrior (Wisd. Sol. xviii. 15) can really bridge the gap. The planes of imagination in the Apocalypse and the Gospel can never meet. It is clear that this and the unknown name do not stand together. Those who retain the first naturally regard the second as an intrusion. Its entry may be due to the desire to accumulate all titles of honour on so august a Leader, and thus provide a link between the Apocalyptic Hero and the cosmic interpretation

[1] Dr. Charles removes it from the text, but offers no reason for its subsequent addition.

of Christ's person establishing itself in the Ephesian school.[1]

As the martial array issues from the sky an angel standing in the sun proclaims an invitation, after the manner of Ezekiel (xxxix. 17-20), to the birds of prey to come to God's great supper, the gruesome counterpart of the Messianic feast. In the ensuing conflict the Beast and the False Prophet are captured and flung into the lake of fire, apparently located in the abyss. The assembled kings with all their hosts on horse and foot, down to the humblest slave, are slain with the sword out of the Rider's mouth, and the vultures and crows feed on their carcases.

Indian theology had its visions also. There, too, human society tended constantly to decline. Truth faded, sin increased, and peace and righteousness could only be restored by a divine Deliverer. We have already seen what signs would precede his advent.[2] As time advanced towards the close of the Four Ages, social disorders would threaten to destroy society, and the framework of nature would begin to give way. Then Vishnu the Preserver would descend to be born as a Brāhman named Kalki. Brāhmans and warriors would rally to his support. Çiva, according to one tradition, would provide him with a white horse, and he would ride through the world redressing human wrongs. Evil-doers would be destroyed—they must be exterminated, not redeemed—and the Rule of Righteousness would be established. The white horse is no Christian symbol, as has sometimes been supposed. It has a much older pedigree. Hundreds of years before our era Buddhist imagination had drawn its glowing picture of the Great King of Glory, the peaceful sovereign of the four quarters of the earth. Among his Seven Treasures was a wondrous horse, all white, save for the thunder-cloud on head and mane. When the king went forth in royal array with his army, his chariots and horses, his elephants and men, they bore no deadly weapons, they marched without baton or sword. Then

[1] It is noteworthy that the title Christ, rarely used in the Apocalypse, does not appear here, though it belongs to his royalty (xi. 15, xx. 4).

[2] *Ante*, p. 22.

the kings of the four quarters of the earth in succession came forth to meet him, not in rivalry or hostility, but in welcome and homage. 'All is thine, O mighty king, be thou a Teacher to us.' The king in answer bade them slay no living thing, nor steal, nor be unchaste, nor speak a lie, nor drink any maddening drink.[1] And the kings of the four quarters of the earth obeyed. It is an ideal of universal peace, achieved without violence or conquest by the simple power of goodness, purity, truth, self-control. The Indian interpretation of the moral life made each man the architect of his own character through successive births. It could not admit wholesale and indiscriminate destruction from above. Requital for evil was indeed assured. But no one who ever entered hell would fail to secure release when he had paid his due.

The Dragon still remained at large. Of the angels who fought with him against Michael (xii. 7) no more is heard. He gathers into himself the different forms in which the powers of evil had been mythologically presented. He is the 'old serpent' of the garden of Eden who tempted Eve, and 'brought death into the world and all our woe.' He is a prominent figure among the 'sons of God' as they present themselves before Yahweh (Job i. 6), known as 'the Sātān' (the Adversary), who mingles grimly in the haunts of men, and is entrusted with the trial of Job. In the Greek version of the Old Testament he has become 'the Devil,' and the author of the Wisdom of Solomon identifies him (ii. 24) with the treacherous snake as the Oppressor of humanity. Such a being was readily amalgamated with cognate figures elsewhere. The conflict of the monster of the deep with the god of light, Marduk, was told in many a tale in Western Asia out of ancient Babylonian lore, and left its echoes in the language of prophet and psalmist celebrating the majesty of the Most High. On an Egyptian sarcophagus before the days of Moses the great serpent Apep lay chained in the underworld after the victory of the Sun-god Rê.[2] The

[1] *Dialogues of the Buddha*, tr. T. W. Rhys Davids, part ii. (1910), p. 203.

[2] Budge, *The Egyptian Heaven and Hell* (1906), ii. p. 287; iii. p. 188.

demon Vritra, conceived by the Vedic poets as 'the enemy of mankind enveloping his prey like a serpent in his coils,' is repeatedly presented as a serpent (*ahi*), slain by the great god Indra.[1] His mythological counterpart, the serpent (*azhi*) Dahāk, in the Zend Avesta, with three heads, six eyes, and three mouths, descended from the evil spirit Ahriman, engages in conflict with Atar, son of Ormazd, the heavenly fire, whose flaming majesty has been compared with the Jewish Shechinah, but is defeated. He succeeds, however, in slaying the ideal king Yima, and reigns in his stead a thousand years, till he is captured by Thraetaona, the hero of the Persian epic, and imprisoned under the volcanic Mount Damāvand. Released from captivity by Ahriman as the era of the Resurrection approaches, he will rush into the world and swallow one-third of the inhabitants, mankind, cattle, sheep and other creatures. Water, fire and vegetation, smitten by his malice, will go to Ormuzd and complain. Then Keresasp, slayer of the monsters of Ahriman's creation, will be raised to destroy him. Soshyans, the Saviour, will appear, and the Resurrection will begin.[2]

Behind these figures of apocalyptic imagination lies a common theme, the conflict between the powers of light and darkness, sunshine and storm. The genius of Zarathustra had given to it an impassioned ethical significance, and the contact of Israel with the followers of the prophet of Iran stimulated its own moral energies to fresh flights into the future. In a century or two after Cyrus entered Babylon a voice is heard announcing that the 'host of the high ones on high' and the kings of the earth shall be shut up together in the pit (Isai. xxiv. 21, 22). The powers that have misgoverned the world shall be overthrown, that Yahweh of hosts may reign gloriously in Jerusalem.[3] It is the dawn of a new hope, which will be reshaped again and again in succeeding generations. Enoch relates how Raphael was instructed to bind Azazel hand and foot and plunge him into darkness beneath the

[1] Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology* (1897), §§ 64, 68.

[2] Cp. *S.B.E.* iv. p. 9; xxiii. 61, 298; v. 131 f., 150, 234.

[3] Cp. *ante* p. 10.

desert under a pile of rough and jagged rocks, till on the day of the great Judgment he should be cast into the fire for ever (x. 4-6, cp. liv. 3-6). A single angel is in like manner seen by John descending from the sky (xx. 1). He carries the key of the abyss (ix. 1), and a great chain lies upon his hand. He is powerful enough to lay hold of the Dragon unaided, bind him and cast him into the abyss. There he is locked in for a thousand years, while his servants the Beast and the False Prophet are plunged in the burning lake. No reason is assigned for this preferential treatment. It is part of a fixed scheme, to be carried out under apocalyptic necessity. The last conflict has yet to be fought, but while the Messiah reigns the Dragon must be restrained from mischief. When the thousand years are finished, ' he must be loosed for a little time.'

II

What are these thousand years ? They are apparently a familiar period. Those who conceived the world and its inhabitants in terms of good and evil sought in some way to define its duration. It might be viewed as a continuous decline from a higher purity to increasing corruption, and India and Greece both reckoned the process as lasting through four ages; to which Brahmanical speculation attached corresponding numbers, the total amounting to 12,000.[1] Hindu theology, however, simply provided for their repetition in successions of worlds; and Hesiod threw no prophetic glance into the future. The intense moral conviction of Zarathustra inspired the belief in an approaching victory of Ahura Mazda, the Lord Omniscient, over the Lie ; and his followers afterwards worked out a scheme covering like the Hindu 12,000 years, but distributed into four equal periods of 3,000 each, during which the powers of good and evil alternately prevailed. An echo of the same number four has often been found in Daniel's series of four monarchies (ii. 37 ff.),

[1] Cp. J. E. C., *Theism in Mediaeval India* (1921), p. 142 f. The age of the heroes in the Hesiodic scheme is recognised as an insertion into the older series, gold, silver, bronze, and iron.

terminating like the Persian ages in the establishment of the divine Rule. Jewish imagination played freely over different figures. Enoch assigned 10,000 years for the punishment of the wicked angels till the great Judgment when they should be destroyed (xviii. 16, xix. 1). The figure ten appears in another scheme of ten world-weeks, in unequal division, seven being occupied with secular history from the creation, the remaining three comprising the Messianic Kingdom, which then makes way for the new heaven and the new earth (Enoch xci. 12-17). The author of the Assumption of Moses apparently allots 5,000 years for the world's history,[1] and dispenses altogether with a Messianic reign on earth. But this was an expectation dear to national thought. It was rooted in the language of ancient prophecy, and gathered around the presentation of Jerusalem as the religious centre of the world. A hint in the Secrets of Enoch provided a place for it in the time-scheme (xxxiii. 1). Jewish piety had already caught hold of the Psalmist's measure and inverted it. If a thousand years were but as yesterday in the Lord's sight (xc. 4), then a day might be reckoned at a thousand years.[2] To match creation the world was accordingly supposed to last a week in which the days were after the 'fashion of seven thousand.' Of these the history of humanity occupied six, and the seventh was reserved for the Messiah. At the beginning of the eighth thousand time would pass through the Judgment into eternity, when years, weeks, days, would cease.

Among the Rabbis speculation was often exercised concerning the duration of the Messiah's reign. Anticipation ranged from the modest suggestion of one or possibly three generations, or the more precise periods of sixty or seventy years, to the longer reaches of four hundred, or a thousand, or even two thousand years.[3] The Solomonic

[1] So Voltz, *Jüdische Eschatol.* (1903), p. 170, on x. 12. Charles (1897) only reckons 4250.

[2] Cp. Charles on Jubilees, iv. 30 ; 2 Pet. iii. 8 ; Ep. Barnab. xv. 4-7.

[3] Voltz, *Jüdische Eschatol.* p. 236. Cp. Klausner, *Die Messianischen Vorstellungen, etc.* (1904), p. 27. The number 400 was founded on a supposed correspondence by which the Messianic Age would balance the period of Egyptian bondage.

Psalmist might predict that his Davidic prince should 'smite the earth with the rod of his mouth for ever' (xvii. 39), perhaps with no more definite meaning than the courtier's salutation, 'O king, live for ever.' When the Messiah was expected in the first of the two Ages, he would naturally rule as long as it lasted, though no time were fixed either for his appearance or for the great transition.[1] The angel tells Ezra (vii. 28 f.), however, that after four hundred years the Messiah shall die, and in the judgment which follows he has no place, as though he were needed no more. The Christian eschatologist thus entered into a double hope, a Messianic reign on earth, to be followed after the Resurrection and the Judgment by eternal bliss. In the scanty records which alone survive from the first generation of believers, a strange hint is found in the promise attributed to Jesus himself that his twelve disciples should sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.[2] Already in the days of Paul the hope has broadened into general privilege. 'Know ye not,' he asks the Corinthians (1 Cor. vi. 2), 'that the saints shall judge the world . . . that we shall judge angels?' The prospect is that of continuous rule, as in Daniel's vision (vii. 27), and lies behind the Apostle's ironic language, 'Already ye have reigned without us' (1 Cor. iv. 8), or the assurance 'If we endure, we shall also reign with him' (2 Tim. ii. 12). The combination of these various elements with the desire to provide a special recompense for the martyrs when their persecutor, the Beast, had been overthrown, produced the expectation of a Messianic kingdom lasting a thousand years in which they should have a distinguished share.

The brevity of the Seer, however, suggests many questions. Where were the thrones set, over whom did those that sat upon them reign, what was the issue of their rule? The natural centre of such sovereignty was Jerusalem, its immediate scope the ancient land of Israel (Bar. xxix., xl.). This expectation was vivid among the Christians of

[1] Baruch xl. 3; 4 Ezra xii. 34.

[2] Luke xxii. 30, even at the supper-table, with Judas present! Matt. xix. 28, on the journey to Jerusalem.

Asia Minor in the second century. Justin, who had lived in Ephesus, ascribed to John 'one of the apostles of Christ,' a prophecy that believers should dwell for a thousand years in Jerusalem, which should be rebuilt and adorned. Jesus has promised that all the saints should find a future possession in the land of Canaan, and Justin even affirmed that he would shine an eternal light in the restored city.[1] Irenæus carried the hope with him to Gaul. It was fitting, he argued, that the martyrs should be revived in the world in which they had been slain for the love of God, and sufferers should similarly receive the reward of their suffering. But their abode must itself be brought back to its pristine condition. Jerusalem, in which the righteous are disciplined beforehand for incorruption, must become the image of the city which should descend on to the new earth; wild animals should cease to prey upon each other; the land should be miraculously fertile; and then he gravely extracts from the Expositions of Papias a prediction ascribed by the Elders to Jesus of a wonderful vine which should have ten thousand branches, each branch ten thousand twigs, each twig ten thousand shoots, each shoot ten thousand clusters, and each cluster ten thousand grapes.[2] Such were the exercises of eschatologic fancy. The hope of a new Jerusalem had first entered Israel's imagination through the glowing anticipations of the prophets of the Captivity. In contact with the Babylonian doctrine of the correspondences on earth with the worlds above (*ante*, p. 54), the consecrated Dwelling in the wilderness depicted in Exodus was believed to have been constructed by Moses in accordance with the pattern which had been shown him in the mount (xxv. 40). When Enoch has witnessed the judgment on the guilty angels, the faithless shepherds and the blinded sheep, he sees the old Jerusalem removed and a new one brought by the Lord of the sheep more splendid than the first. Whence did it come? The natural answer was 'from on high.' The Apostle Paul knew

[1] *Dialogue*, lxxx, lxxxi, cxiii, cxxxix.

[2] Irenæus, V. xxxi.-xxxiii. A simpler form of a similar fantasy will be found in Baruch xxix. 5. Cp. below, p. 214[2].

a ' Jerusalem which is above ' (Gal. iv. 26). Baruch was told that it had been prepared beforehand when God took counsel to make Paradise, and had been shown by him to Adam, Abraham, and Moses (iv. 3, 4). Ezra received the promise:

> ' For to you is opened Paradise,
> planted the Tree of Life,
> The future Age prepared,
> plenteousness made ready ;
> A City builded,
> A Rest appointed.' [1]

Such were the consolations which were ready for Christian adaptation. By the end of the second century at Carthage Tertullian proclaims the coming kingdom of Christ upon earth in the divinely built Jerusalem let down from heaven, which the Apostle Paul had designated ' our Mother from above.' There it was in heaven already awaiting the hour of its descent ; had not unbelievers during an expedition to the East testified that for forty days a city was seen in Judea morning by morning suspended in the sky, its walls fading as the day wore on ; and was it not just that Christ's servants should be recompensed for what they had lost in this world, and find their joy in the place where they had suffered affliction for his name ? [2] About half a century later the African poet Commodian repeats the same hope with the addition that the risen shall marry and beget offspring for a thousand years.[3] Early in the fourth century another African writer, Lactantius, develops the familiar theme with variations. The sacred city will be built by God, who will himself dwell in it with the righteous. To provide for the multitude of their offspring the ground shall bring forth fruit without labour, the wolf shall roam peacefully among the flocks, the nations shall be subdued for bondage, and all bloodshed shall cease, till the great Judgment arrives,

[1] viii. 52, Box. Cp. x. 27, 44 ; and vii. 26, xiii. 36 with Box's notes. Cp. Heb. xii. 22.

[2] *Against Marcion*, iii. 24 ; *On the Resurrection of the Flesh*, xxv.

[3] *Instructions*, xliv.

and the righteous are transformed into angels to serve God for ever.[1]

It will be noted that some teachers looked for the new Jerusalem from on high to inaugurate the reign of Christ on earth. Did they really find the apocalyptic description in that position in their texts? The question has been recently raised by Dr. Charles, apart, of course, from any such suggestion. Contradictory implications in the picture of the Holy City on the new earth after the judgment have long been the perplexity of critics. The Seer who has already beheld it coming down out of heaven in bridal array (xxi. 2), has afterwards to be carried away for the same purpose by one of the angels of the seven bowls, more than a thousand years after the marriage supper had been announced (xix. 7). The instruction which follows in the first passage, 'Write, for these words are faithful and true' (xxi. 5), prepares the way for a summary of teaching closing the whole book (vv. 6-8). The declaration concerning the trustworthiness of the 'words' is repeated in the same terms by another voice (xxii. 6), apparently following a much more elaborate account of the City, and preparing the way for a more complicated epilogue. But this second description assumes that kings and peoples remain even after the resurrection with distinct nationalities, and it is even implied that there are still persons not recognised in the Lamb's book of life who must be kept out (xxi. 24, 27), a dismal catalogue of criminals (xxii. 15). How have these last escaped condemnation at the great Judgment?

Moved by some of these difficulties Dr. Charles suggests that the Prophet was unable from some unknown cause to complete the revision of his work, and its last three chapters fell into confusion, the disorder extending even to fragments of our present verse-divisions. He offers us, accordingly, a complete rearrangement. Can it be said, however, that in placing the elaborate description of the

[1] *Inst. Div.* vii. 24; *Epitome*, lxxii. A contemporary in Pannonia, Victorinus, Bishop of Pettau, also placed the new Jerusalem from heaven in the first resurrection. Cp. Haussleiter, *Comm. in Apoc.* xx. 4-6, xxi. 1, *Corpus Scriptor. Eccles. Latinorum*, vol. xlix (1916), pp. 140, 146.

city (xxi. 9 ff.) before the establishment of the thrones for those who reign with Christ (xx. 4) the incongruities are overcome? When sun and moon are no more and God and the Lamb supply the light, do Gog and Magog gather their armies by this supernatural illumination? And how should they be able to attack a city thus divinely protected? Moreover, when earth and sky flee away in preparation for the great Judgment, is this heaven-descended fabric with its vivifying river and life-giving trees, and God and the Lamb for its temple, to be flung like rubbish to the void, and a second brand-new Holy City produced out of the world above? This duplication of the same event seems due rather to the juxtaposition of diversities of material imperfectly harmonised than a deliberate purpose of repetition. So little do we know of the history of the book that it may even be conjectured that the appearance of the angel of the bowls (cp. xvii. 1) belonged to a scheme which made no provision for the millennial reign of the martyrs and the saints.

How it should be inaugurated we are not told. If the Prophet had in view an advent in clouds of glory such as is predicted in the Gospels or anticipated by Paul, he is strangely silent on its significance. The scope of the associated sovereignty is undefined. So also is its relation to the living at the era of its establishment and the rebuilding of the ruined city. Do generations of the dwellers in Palestine continue to succeed each other, and in the absence of the evil trio attempt to convert the multitudes whose kings and armies were slain by the white-robed Horseman with the sword issuing from his mouth? Is that splendid proclamation of 'everlasting good news' (xiv. 6) to be carried by a great mission of believers to 'every nation and tribe and tongue and people' when they might listen without disturbing influence? Alas, the hope of the conquerors in the desperate struggle that all should come and worship the Almighty (xv. 4) remains unrealised. No sooner is Satan let loose than the process of deception is successfully renewed. Ezekiel had described an attack on Israel redeemed and restored to its ancient home. Gog of the

land of Magog would lead the host. Apocalyptic tradition has apparently converted the personal and place-names into a comprehensive designation of the populations from the four quarters of the earth. They swarm in vast hordes over the land; they compass the city which God loved, where the sharers in Christ's rule upon their thrones form a heavenly encampment round it. But their onset is suddenly arrested; a supernatural fire descends from the sky and consumes them. Satan himself is flung into the ever-burning lake in the grim company of his associates, the Beast and the False Prophet, together with all whose names are not written in the book of life.

III

The forces of evil are not even yet wholly vanquished, but the way is cleared for the solemn Judgment of the whole world. In contrast with the detailed description of the incidence of some of the plagues, a sublime simplicity restrains the apocalyptic pen. The disappearance of the kingdom of Christ and the saints is unnoted. The scene is immensity itself. Earth and sky, the visible fabric of the world, have vanished. The throne needs no living creatures to support it, nor does the judge require myriads of angels to enhance his dignity. Even the Messiah is unnamed. The dead, in the oft-repeated formula, both great and small, gather in space before him, a vast assembly sent back to life from Hades and the sea. So Enoch had predicted that earth, Sheol, and Hell, should give up their dead, and even those devoured by beasts in the desert or by fish in the sea should be restored.[1] But if the Lamb was not on the judgment seat, the keepers of the books were there. The books were of two kinds; one set recorded every person's deeds; the other was a register of the elect. To the modern student it is not clear why there should thus be two kinds of test. If, as St. Paul taught, the saints were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, their names were already inscribed for life. Why, then, should their conduct

[1] li. 1, lxi. 5. Dr. Charles thinks these passages limited to Israel.

demand examination? There is no answer to such a question except the obvious fact that the same Apostle also repeatedly declares that God will render to every man according to his works, and assigns eternal life not to those already chosen, but to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honour and incorruption (Rom. ii. 7). 'For we must all,' he declares, 'be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad' (2 Cor. v. 10). We need not accuse the Seer of inconsistency when the Apostle could hold both views and expectations at the same time. The results must needs coincide, but how the harmony is produced lies beyond his sight.

No difficulty attends the condemnation of Death and Hades, the symbolic figures of dissolution, who have apparently continued to play their part upon the living during the Millennial Reign. They are thrown into the burning lake, and those whose names were not written in the book of life were sent to join them. It was a dreadful, an irrevocable doom. The second death has sometimes been interpreted as annihilation. We can understand the wish that prompts it, but contemporary Jewish eschatology taught only too clearly a future of unceasing torment. The second death involved not only ceaseless exclusion from the vision of God and Christ, but the dread penalty of perpetual pain. In its passionate protest against sin Israel's thought failed to follow the Persian teachers from whom it had learned so much. They alone perceived that to leave hell tenanted by its wicked lords was to conceive a realm outside the jurisdiction of Ahura Mazda. God could not, in the great phrase of St. Paul, be 'all in all,' if his sovereignty was disputed by the inhabitants of everlasting fire. The successors of Zarathustra, accordingly, taught that after the resurrection (when all the dead would rise together) the guilty would be purged by immersion for three days in a stream of molten metal, which would be to the righteous soft as a bath of milk. Ahura would then appear with his six Bountiful Immortals, and the destruction of the hostile

powers would begin. At length Ahriman and the Great Serpent would alone be left. The Serpent is burned in the molten metal; the hiding-place of Ahriman with its hateful occupant is consumed. The Evil is thus annihilated; it is not redeemed or transmuted into good; it is eliminated and extinguished. Ahura, it is declared, will 'bring back the land of hell for the enlargement of the world.' 'The Renovation arises in the universe by his will, and the world is immortal for ever and everlasting.' [1]

The Judgment is over, it remains to depict the bliss of the redeemed. Like so much that precedes, the final chapters seem to contain elements from various sources, not always congruous with each other. As earth and heaven had disappeared, a new earth and heaven are needed. The old creation is not liberated in Pauline phrase from the bondage of corruption. The curse of dissolution lay upon it. Stained with sin, it could not hold together before the majesty of the Judge, and vanished altogether from before the throne. No longer had it even the temporary value of ministering to his praise, as when the great song of blessing and honour and glory and dominion rose to God and the Lamb from heaven and earth, the realms below, and even the sea (v. 13). So a new heaven and a new earth come into being. The sea, restless and turbulent, emblem in the old mythology of the hostile power, is no more. Only the burning lake remains unchanged. The ancient promise (Isai. lxv. 17) is fulfilled, Jerusalem is at last to be created 'a rejoicing,' and the Seer beholds a new holy city descend out of the sky. It is the symbol of the dependence of the new religion on the old. Christianity, based upon history and prophecy, was the fulfilment of Judaism. A great voice from the throne proclaims as reality what Ezekiel had seen from afar as a wondrous hope (xxxvii. 27), that God would dwell with men, and they should be his people and he would be their God. And Deity himself confirms this fresh relation, 'Behold,

[1] *Bundahish*, xxx, on the basis of older texts now lost; cp. *S.B.E.* v. p. 129; Moulton, *Early Zoroastrianism* (1913), p. 289 f.

I make all things new.' [1] With the assurance that they are come to pass in his eternal purpose —' I am the Alpha and the Omega '—the divine voice suddenly adjusts itself in conclusion to the Prophet's own day, and repeats in brief the warnings and promises already given by the Spirit to the Churches. For him that is athirst there shall be water of life freely (vii. 17). The conqueror in life's warfare (ii. 7) shall be received as an heir ; the privilege once announced to the successors of the royal house (2 Sam. vii. 14) is renewed to each loyal disciple individually, ' he shall be my son.' But for the timid, the disloyal and unfaithful, and criminals of every kind, there is only the second death.

The materials at the Prophet's disposal are not yet exhausted. Just as he had been carried into the wilderness by one of the angels of the Bowls, to look on the great Harlot, so in exalted contrast he is conveyed by a like guidance to a lofty mountain that he may gaze on the Bride, the wife of the Lamb. The mountain is the counterpart of the Mount of Assembly (Isai. xiv. 13), parallel with the holy mountain of God with which the garden of God is associated (Ezek. xxviii. 14). Enoch conceived it as one of seven, excelling the encompassing six in height, and resembling the seat of a throne ; and Michael informs him that its summit is like the throne of God, where the Lord of glory will sit when he shall come down to visit the earth with goodness (xxiv.-xxv. 3). It was the Jewish equivalent of the Babylonian world-mountain which reappears in the cosmography of both East and West. In India it is Mount Mēru, on whose summit is the divine city of Amarāvati, the home of Indra, lord of the gods of the ancient Veda. Spreading over the mountain with a circumference of a hundred leagues, it was open to the multitude of the righteous with

[1] The clause in ver. 5, ' And he saith, Write,' etc., appears to be an editorial insertion parallel with xxii. 6. The Deity can hardly need thus to interrupt himself to confirm his own declaration. Notice the different Greek formula introducing it, and compare similar angelic voices in similar fashion (xvii. 15, xix. 9, xxii. 9, 10). Loisy's proposal to adopt the reading ' I have become ' (*i.e.* I am) and join it with Alpha and Omega cannot be called satisfactory. Cp. the repeated formula (xxii. 13).

a thousand gates. Its walls, adorned with all manner of precious stones, glittered with light, and its trees yielded all seasons' fruit. The sun did not scorch there, nor did heat or cold torment ; among the inhabitants there was no sickness or infirmity, no despondency or grief, no anger or covetousness ; they dwelt together in harmony and peace. Greece, too, had its heavenly Olympus, of which the Thessalian mountain was the representative, and there were the golden houses of the Immortals which Pindar celebrated in triumphal song.

In Jewish imagination the mountain was the ideal Zion which should rise above the surrounding heights (Isai. ii.), and serve as a beacon to the nations, drawing them to the sanctuary from which teaching should go forth to all the world. There Ezekiel in captivity had seen in vision the frame of a city on the south (xl. 2). John beholds it in shimmering splendour like that sparkling stone to which he compared the person of the Deity himself in his first rapture as he stood at heaven's door. The encircling wall was, like the mountain, ' great and high.' As in Ezekiel's scheme it was pierced with twelve gates, three on each side. They had their angel-warders, such as the Babylonian prophet had seen watching upon the walls (Isai. lxii. 6), or as the priestly lore of Egypt conceived to guard the gates of the house of Osiris in the world below. Upon the gates, as Ezekiel told, the names of the twelve tribes were inscribed. Was this a Jewish or a Christian plan ? The basis of the scheme is plainly Jewish, but its meaning is that the Church is the true heir of the ancient people of God. The Apostles, whose names are on the twelve foundations, sprang from the primitive circle of the disciples, and supported the community of believers. Did not St. Paul teach that the household of God was reared on the foundation of Apostles and Prophets (Ephes. ii. 20) ?

The city, so Ezekiel had pictured it, lies four-square, its length and breadth the same. Whether the dimensions of measurement (12,000 stadia, nearly 1,500 English miles) refer to one side only, or to the whole circumference, is not clear (probably the former) ; and this extravagance is

completed by the statement that the height is equal to the length and breadth. Reduced to modern figures the sum amounts to 7,000,000 feet. If the text be correct, the city is conceived like the Holy of Holies in the Temple as a perfect cube, the Jewish symbol of perfection, like the circle or the sphere in Western imagery. Conceivably the third dimension has been added after the fashion of the Pauline phrase (Ephes. iii. 18) without reflection on its incongruity, or it may be that the height applies to the mountain only on which the city rested as on a throne. The wall is measured by another multiple of twelve (144 cubits or 216 feet), whether in thickness or in height is not specified. Its foundations are laid in twelve kinds of precious stones ; prophecy had called for sapphires and rubies and carbuncles (Isai. liv. 11, 12) ; and with Oriental love of splendour Tobit had proclaimed that Jerusalem should be built with sapphires and emeralds and precious stones, her streets paved with beryl and carbuncle, and her walls and towers reared in pure gold (xiii. 16, 17). The twelve stones of the heavenly city have curious relations with the twelve stones on the high-priest's breastplate, and, through current speculation, with the twelve signs of the Zodiac ! [1]

One feature of the ancient capital was wanting. ' I saw no temple therein.' Altar and sacrifice, the ritual which converted the old Priests' court into a shambles—these have all vanished. The sanctuary which dominated every Oriental city, Babylonian, Egyptian, Greek, was not needed as a home for Deity. With splendid daring the Lord God, the Almighty, is himself acclaimed as the temple, to which (it would seem) the Christian editor has added ' and the Lamb.' For sun and moon there is no more need when God's glory, the ' splendour of the glory of the Most High ' (4 Ezra vii. 42), illuminates it.[2] So brilliant is it that the nations can walk by its light, for the future is still conceived in terms of an idealised earth. Humanity remains divided into peoples and organised

[1] See the learned note of Dr. Charles.

[2] The feeble additional presentation of Christ as a lamp is not improved by Dr. Charles's bold change of it into ' the ark.'

under kings. Monarchs and their retinues of wealth arrive at the city in continuous procession through the ever-open gates (as in the great ode, Isai. lx), but none that are unclean may enter there any more than in the older vision when Jerusalem arrayed herself in her festal robes (Isai. lii. 1). Based upon the antique material of tradition, the picture does not fit the solemn division of the multitude before the throne into risen saints and rejected sinners. In the great Judgment scene the whole race of man receives the allotment of final destiny. The new earth contains only those whose names are already inscribed in the Book of Life. For the idolator or the liar there is no further place. Yet the ultimate vision contemplates the possibility of their existence, and mercifully prescribes no worse doom for them than exclusion from the holy city (xxii. 15).

Through the *platea*, the ' place ' or square of the city, flows a river issuing from the throne. Similarly Ezekiel had beheld healing waters bursting forth from beneath the temple threshold on the East (xlvii.) ; and Zechariah had proclaimed that fertilising streams should go forth from Jerusalem to both East and West, uninterrupted by seasonal vicissitude (xiv. 8). Waters of life belong to many old mythologies ; in Babylonia to the cult of Ea, god of the great Deep, Lord of wisdom, and the paradise of Eridu ; in Egypt to the cult of Osiris and the initiation into immortality after the great judgment. In India the heavenly stream came from the foot of Vishnu, flowed round the wondrous city, and divided (like the river of Eden) into four mighty sources, feeding the four quarters of the world. The river of the new Jerusalem is bordered as Ezekiel conceived it with trees on either bank, the ' tree of life ' presented generically. It is the tree of Paradise, fragrant beyond all fragrance as Enoch saw it (xxv. 4) with unfading bloom, which was to give food to the Elect (xxv. 5). In the Pure Land of the Buddha of Boundless Light, also, were wondrous rivers bordered with trees of various scents ; but the dwellers therein needed no fruit to sustain their deathless life ; the mere wish for food was satisfied without eating. Ezekiel's vision pro-

mised fresh fruit every month, and Ezra added that the fruit should not decay (vii. 123). Among the saints in the city disease, the Prophet implies, would be unknown ; but the nations should find remedies for their sicknesses in the healing leaves. No cursed thing, as Zechariah had said (xiv. 11), should lie between the redeemed and their Lord. God's servants shall see his face, his name is on their foreheads (iii. 12) ; and in the eternal splendour of his being they shall do him service and reign in his kingdom for ever.

Here, it would seem, the Jewish sources from which the Seer has adapted so much into his own vision, came to an end. An epilogue follows, full of voices of encouragement and warning, as mysterious speakers take up successive themes. The abruptness and incoherence which puzzle the reader are possibly due to the incorporation of current sayings, warnings, and devout ejaculations. Three times is the promise of the heavenly Christ repeated, ' I come quickly ' (vv. 7, 12, 20). It is he, therefore, who unexpectedly declares ' these words are faithful and true ' (ver. 6). But where is the utterance which they confirm (xxi. 5) ? The preceding description can hardly be thus regarded. The reference seems to be rather to the whole book. We are transported into the period when they are already written, and the importance of their preservation can be enforced. That is implied also in the language of the angel guide whom John desires to worship, though he had paid no such homage to Jesus just before. The book is the product of the prophetic spirit, and as such is authoritative and sacred. Nothing must be added to it, nor anything taken away. Daniel, at the court of Darius, is enjoined to seal up the vision of Antiochus Epiphanes and his persecutions until the intervening centuries shall have elapsed (viii. 26, xii. 9). John, on the contrary, is bidden, apparently by Christ (vv. 10-12), to let the book go forth openly for all to know its contents, ' for the time is at hand.' But he is warned that he must not expect from it great results. Men will not heed it ; they will continue in their evil ways, the unrighteous and the filthy have lost the opportunity and the power of change.

The end, so often announced, is at hand. The prophetic Spirit and the waiting Church, here conceived in Pauline fashion ('I espoused you to one husband,' 2 Cor. xi. 2), unite in the imploring entreaty, 'Come.' Even the occasional hearers are bidden to join in the prayer (ver. 17); and then, with a sudden turn of thought, the prophet revives the ancient invitation, 'Ho, every one that thirsteth,' and bids the seekers after comfort and help come and take the water of life freely.[1] The promise of the Messiah is heard a third time from the heavenly world, 'Yea, I come quickly,' and the suffering Church once more responds, 'Amen, come, Lord Jesus.' With the prayer for his grace the book is closed.

IV

The Apocalypse had a chequered career in the early Church. To many thinkers, especially of the Alexandrian type, its millennial promises were unacceptable, and it only established its position in the Canon after long struggle. The modern student views it in one aspect as the splendid monument of a great illusion. Its fundamental theme, the approaching end of the world and the close of human history by a great Judgment, belongs to an order of thought that has passed away. In the violent series of dooms upon a guilty world the catastrophes of nature can no longer be fitted into current views of the uniformity of divine Providence in the outward scene; and the succession of generations for nineteen centuries has long since broken through the promise, 'I come quickly.' We now know that the writer worked upon traditional material, already wrought in its main outlines into coherent forms, admitting, however, of fresh combinations and large variety of detail. Behind him is a

[1] The commentators aptly illustrate this double case of the word 'come' from the prayer after the Eucharist in the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles (x. 6):

'Let grace come and let this world pass away.
Hosanna to the God of David!
If any one is holy, let him come,
If any one is not, let him repent.
Our Lord, come!'

body of Jewish imaginative hope, cherished in prophetic spirit for hundreds of years ; and behind this, again, are interpretations of nature and life more ancient still, spread through the culture of Western Asia, shaping the beliefs of many peoples on man, on the world of his experience, the powers surrounding him to hurt or help, and the destiny to which he aspired. All this is true. Between the Revelation and Newton's *Principia* or Darwin's *Origin of Species* there is a great gulf fixed ; and in slowly assimilating the conceptions of science our modern Christianity has had to abandon those of its primitive eschatology. We take them now as the vesture of the poetry of faith. They played a part of immense significance in the first age of the new religion. They generated its missionary fervour as the letters of the Apostle Paul abundantly testify. They secured it opportunity to take root and grow. They sustained the courage and inspired the hope of its disciples ; they bore up the sufferer with patience ; they strengthened him to be faithful unto death. For they were the vehicle of abiding truths, and in forms suited to the world-picture of their time they presented the impassioned conviction of the righteous Rule of God, the assurance of the moral government of the world. This is the essential function of the prophetic spirit. It distinguishes what Matthew Arnold used to call Hebraism from Hellenism. Greek reason reached the perception of intelligence or thought in the universe ; it even apprehended a reflection of the Divine in human nature. But it never conceived the process of the suns as containing any element of spiritual purpose. There was no inward guidance to a divine goal, no vision of a realised righteousness. That alone gave a meaning to life for the Christian, and that is expressed with extraordinary force and picturesqueness in this book. It is founded on a national ideal, expanded to embrace in some sense the whole race. Its centre is a divinely ordered society, gathered in a transfigured community, a holy city. It presents existence as we know it raised to the height of a sublime ideal. That is why, in spite of its pervading ferocities, it retains its hold on our imagination.

The heavenly worship in which all creation joins, the multitude of the redeemed from every tongue and nation, the new heaven and the new earth, the New Jerusalem lighted by the glory of God—these belong not to one century only, but to all time. They are the witness of man's quenchless aspiration after the ideal, his trust that he has not been made in vain, his deep belief that there is a world where the age-long strife with evil is overcome with good.

'Sing we of the Golden City
Pictured in the legends old:
Everlasting light shines o'er it,
Wondrous things of it are told.
Only righteous men and women
Dwell within its gleaming walls;
Wrong is banished from its borders,
Justice reigns throughout its halls.

We are builders of that City,
All our joys and all our groans
Help to rear its shining ramparts;
All our lives are building stones.
For that City we must labour,
For its sake bear pain and grief;
In it find the end of living,
And the anchor of belief.

And the work that we have builded,
Oft with bleeding hands and tears,
Oft in error, oft in anguish,
Will not perish with our years.
It will last and shine transfigured
In the final reign of Right;
It will pass into the splendours
Of the City of the Light.'[1]

NOTE TO LECT. VI

Book of Revelation by Principal Oman

As these lectures were originally written for readers of the English Version, I have avoided all reference in expanding them to a work published after they were first delivered.

[1] Dr. Felix Adler, New York.

Principal Oman issued in 1923 a remarkable rearrangement of the text, with a translation and brief commentary. It is the work of long thought and study. In a short note it is impossible to do more than express a respectful dissent both from its governing idea and from the results which are based upon it. The main conception is that the apparent disorder is due to the confusion of pages which are found to be of equal length when certain glosses and doublets have been eliminated. With the removal of the editorial introduction (i. 1-8), and the epilogue (xxii. 18-21) (due to the editor), the whole book is arranged in twenty-seven leaves of equal length. The first three chapters (i. 9-iii, subject to some small omissions) open the book, as in the Biblical text, occupying four leaves. The letters to the Churches are then followed by a series of visions from Chap. x. onwards, culminating (with various readjustments of short groups of verses) in the description of the New Jerusalem (xxi. 9-xxii. 17), and the millennial reign of Christ and the Saints (xx. 1-10). Not till then is the heavenly worship portrayed in iv.-v. revealed, and the first seal opened (vi. 1). The events in vi. 2-17 are transferred to an earlier period (the references to the seals being cancelled) between xix. 17-21 and xvi. 17-xvii. 9, though the opening of the seventh seal is retained (viii. 1). From vi. 1 the vision passes to vii., viii (with some omissions), ix., small sections from xi., xiv., xv. ; and the whole concludes with xx. 11-xxi. 8.

Immense skill and patience have been bestowed upon this redistribution. It is a very remarkable experiment. But while a book might fall into confusion by a displacement of leaves, such accidental shuffling cannot explain the mixture of the contents of individual leaves. Folio V. contains x. 1-10, xxii. 6-8a, x. 11 ; XI. is made up of xix. 11-16, xiv. 19b-20, xix. 17-21. The transposition of these and similar fragments elsewhere into the middle of remote passages receives no explanation. How came they to be separated from the contexts in which Principal Oman has placed them ? No theory of the ' confusion of pages of equal length ' will account for the removal of such short passages into distant parts of the work.

Assuming that the book now presented to us is the original form, how is its transformation into the traditional text to be explained? Why did the Editor take xxii. 6-8a from between x. 10 and 11, and attach it to xxii. 5?

The attempt to reduce the sequences of the book into a more coherent scheme involves some serious dislocations. The postponement of Chaps. iv. and v. till after the account of the New Jerusalem (XX and XXI) leaves the repeated references to the Lamb, the four Living Creatures, and the Twenty-four Elders (*e.g.* xiv. 1-5 IX, xvii. 4 XIV, xix. 4-9 XVI, xxi. 27, xxii. 3 XVIII) unexplained, as they have never been identified. And it misses the keynote of the whole book, viz. that while the divine purpose is worked out on the earth amid terrors repeatedly renewed, the adoration of heaven is continued with only the unexampled silence of half an hour (viii. 1) after the breaking of the seventh seal. It is not clear why the series in vi. 2-17 should be detached from vi. 1; and the identification of the first horseman as the agent of the Word of God if not the Word himself (XII) is but a feeble sequel to the prior description of the divine Rider called 'Faithful and True,' xix. 11 (XI). After the Beast and the kings of the earth have been overthrown (XI) with their armies, freemen and slaves, how is it that they survive to hide themselves in XII? Along with these and other difficulties a new interpretation of the 'seven kings' (xvii. 10, XIV) is suggested. They are understood to be empires instead of individuals, Egypt, Sodom, Daniel's series of four, and Rome. But to discuss this and other significant problems would require more space than this work allows. It must be enough to call the reader's attention to the independence and freshness of this endeavour to solve some of the many problems connected with a book which has exerted so profound an influence on Christian faith and imagination.

PART II

THE FOURTH GOSPEL

INTRODUCTION

ITS ORIGINS

The Fourth Gospel can never cease to engage our interest and provoke our thought. We owe to its author an incalculable debt. He completed the work begun by the Apostle Paul, the impassioned champion of Christian liberty for the Gentile world, who did not live to see its full assimilation to Greek thought. He provided the 'new teaching'[1] with fresh forms of expression, incorporated into it new modes of experience, took it out of the keeping of a single race, and in the light of a great philosophic conception united it with the whole sphere of existence from the beginning of time.[2] In taking leave of his readers he told them that he had written in order that they might believe that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing they might have life in his name.[3] He seeks, therefore, to depict the character of this august Being, already recognised by the fellow-citizens of the Samaritan woman as the 'Saviour of the world,'[4] and the nature of the life to be won through him. He uses some of the traditions embodied in earlier Gospels; reshapes them and adds others from unknown sources; he weaves into colloquies or discourses impressions and reflections derived from fresh localities and based on different aspects of Church-practice. He thus becomes the real founder of Christian theology, but his Gospel, it is

[1] Acts xvii. 19; cp. Mark i. 27.

[2] The term 'author' is here used inclusively.

[3] John xx. 31. [4] iv. 42.

truly said, 'belongs neither to History nor to Biography, but to the Library of Devotion.' [1]

I

For more than a hundred years past men have sought his name, disputing his identification with John, the Apostle, brother of James, the son of Zebedee. The enquiry was opened in this country as early as 1792 by Edward Evanson, formerly Vicar of Tewkesbury, in a little volume entitled *The Dissonance of the Four Generally Received Evangelists, and the Evidence of their Respective Authenticity examined.* The Fourth Gospel and the Apocalypse, he argued, could not proceed from the same hand, and the Gospel fell into the second century. Wide is the range of conjecture which has since then gathered round its origin. It has been ascribed to John, the Elder of Ephesus, to the 'Beloved Disciple' who has been himself discovered in Andrew, or in the Elder, or in Lazarus, or in Aristion; [2] to John Mark, the companion of St. Paul; to the writer of the Epistle to the Ephesians; to the author of the homily so improperly named in our Revised Version 'the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews,' himself sometimes identified with the Alexandrian Apollos; [3] and, strangest of all, to the Gnostic Cerinthus, or to Menander of Kapparatea, pupil of Simon the Mage, to whom later generations looked back as the deadly source of all perversity and falsehood; or to a follower of Marcion about 135 A.D., whose work was re-edited from a 'Catholic' point of view about the year 170.[4]

I have no clue to the secret of this rare and lofty genius any more than anyone else, and I can offer you no solution of the mystery of its composition. But if we cannot tell who wrote the book, we can at least endeavour to under-

[1] Canon Streeter, *The Four Gospels* (1924), p. 365.

[2] See below, p. 214.

[3] Cp. H. Latimer Jackson, *The Problem of the Fourth Gospel* (1918), p. 107 ff.

[4] So Henri Delafosse, *Le Quatrième Evangile* (1925), p. 121 f.

stand what it means, what conceptions of Christ and Christianity it sought to present and enforce, what was the nature of the belief for which it called, and the life which it promised. To those, therefore, who do me the honour to meet me here, I suggest a brief study of its ideas rather than an examination of its historical data. We shall not attempt to determine the order of its incidents—the late American theologian Dr. Briggs (of Union Theological Seminary) once told me that he believed all the three passovers included in the public ministry of Jesus to be the same, the Gospel order was not chronological but (as he phrased it) ' topical '—we will endeavour rather to learn what the author in framing his work sought to teach. Yet before entering on this quest it may be well to ask what was known about the Gospel prior to its appearance as one of the sacred Four first named together towards the end of the second century by Irenæus.

Irenæus is commonly supposed to have been born in Asia Minor, possibly about 130 A.D. Part of his youth had been spent in Smyrna, where he had known the venerable Bishop, Polycarp. Thence he had travelled westward through Italy, till he found service as Presbyter in the Church at Lyons. When the terrible persecution initiated by Marcus Aurelius in 177 cost the death of its Bishop, Pothinus, Irenæus was chosen as his successor. Soon afterwards he began the composition of his famous work against the Gnostic heresies, probably between 180 and 185. He surveyed a wide expansion of Christianity, from Asia to Gaul, from Syria to Spain, from Libya to Germany. Out of a number of Gospels, some still represented like the Gospels according to the Hebrew, to Peter, or the Ebionites, by surviving fragments, and others known only by name,[1] the Church from East to West was united in recognising our Four. The Gospels, he argued, could not be either more or fewer in number. Were there not four quarters of the habitable world, four winds with vivifying power, four Living Creatures upholding the throne of God, four covenants with humanity from Adam

[1] See M. R. James, *The Apocryphal New Testament* (1924).

(or Noah) to Christ?[1] In this enumeration of them they are placed in the order John, Luke, Matthew, Mark. Of course, this numerical concord was not the real reason for their choice, as Irenæus well knew. But it throws an interesting light on the modes of thought current around him, in which identities of number, symbols, and analogies, were invested with mythical relations, and out of this realm of imagination were produced as facts. Historically the Four stand at the head of our New Testament as the result of a complicated process through at least two generations, culminating in the selection of a group of writings which could be put beside the Scriptures of the Old Testament inherited by the Church from the Synagogue. The argument was that the doctrines publicly taught by the heads of the great churches founded by apostles, and in possession of their writings or those of their companions, must be accepted against the Gnostic claim to have preserved a secret tradition, imparted (it was sometimes represented) between the resurrection and the ascension. After accounting for Matthew, Mark, and Luke in our order, Irenæus accordingly added, 'afterwards John, the disciple of the Lord, who also had leaned upon his breast, himself published a Gospel while residing in Ephesus in Asia.'[2] Here is the historic ground for the recognition of an Evangelic canon of four members. It was doubtless on this basis that Tatian, who came to Rome from beyond the Tigris and left it about 172 A.D. for Mesopotamia, compiled his Diatessaron or Gospel 'by Four,' a harmony which remained in use in the churches of Syriac-speaking Christians for more than two centuries. Of the authorship of the books it said nothing. But between 180 and 188 the Bishop of Antioch, Theophilus, born also in the neighbourhood of the Tigris and Euphrates, addressing an unknown Autolycus, specified John as the author of the first verse of the Gospel, 'In the beginning was the Word.' From Mesopotamia to the Rhone Valley the writer's name is the same. The Ephesian origin of the book has been generally accepted on the testimony of Irenæus; and a few words may be

[1] *Adv. Hæres.* iii. 11, 8. [2] iii. 1, 1.

said accordingly concerning the city where it probably saw the light, before we enquire who was John.

II

No greater contrast could be found among cities than that between Ephesus and the seat of primitive Christianity at Jerusalem. The city of David, which had long since spread beyond its narrow compass on Mount Zion, was probably far older. But it had no significance except as the visible centre of Israel's religion. Its great feasts might draw pilgrims from far-off lands, from Parthia to Rome, from Arabia to the Black Sea. But they came only to worship. The city itself upon its mountain height was not on the road to anywhere. The commerce between Egypt and Babylonia passed it by. Devout Jews might bring gifts to the Temple, and the money-changers carried on some of the business of a bank, but there was no great foreign trade or gathered wealth. No one taught Greek or lectured on philosophy. Its schools were occupied with but one study, the sacred Law, interpreted with the help of a conception of Wisdom to which contact with Hellenic thought had doubtless given a wider meaning than its ancient proverbial type. But its culture, though it had learned from Babylonian cosmology and the seers of Persia, was still narrow, its life austere in spite of Herodian luxury, and its religious practice exclusive.

Ephesus, on the other hand, had become the first city in Asia Minor, and ranked with Alexandria and Antioch. It stood on the left bank of the river Cayster, which flowed into the bay now known by the name of Scala Nuova. Under the rule of the Lydian Crœsus, it passed into Persian hands on his overthrow by Cyrus (546 B.C.). Its commercial importance rapidly increased after the conquests of Alexander, and in the middle of the first century before our era the victories of Sulla over Mithridates made it the base of Roman power. There, for instance, Cicero landed (B.C. 51) on his way to Cilicia, and it became the starting-point for travellers going east. Great roads led in different directions; through Iconium

to Tarsus and so to Antioch or across to the Euphrates; over the central highlands away to Armenia; or, again, northwards to the Black Sea,—all connected by cross-routes. Caravans laden with goods of many kinds poured the produce of field and vineyard, wool from the central plateau, and rare fabrics from the further East, into the ships that lay waiting in the docks. The large city-port four miles from the sea was crowded with Greek and Phœnician merchantmen. Along the western coast there were natural harbours and prosperous cities, and a constant stream of traffic was carried on by small vessels among the adjoining islands. Thus enriched, the city spread over the hills rising above the plain, and stately buildings were reared out of its wealth as the chief mart of Asia Minor, forum and Council-house, a stadium 850 feet in length, a theatre to seat 24,000 spectators, and a smaller Odeum for lyric performances, while porticoes and colonnades were filled with statues and pictures. Here was a civic splendour to which Jerusalem could offer no parallel.

Trade brought together men of many races. The cities of the interior, though not on the same scale, were no less busy and prosperous. Many of them had settlements of Jews, and, like Ephesus, provided openings for Christian missionaries. In the northern regions of Bithynia where Christianity was emptying the temples of their worshippers in Trajan's day while John was said to be still alive, tradition placed the preaching of Andrew. The evangelist Philip with his prophesying daughters left Caesarea and settled at Hierapolis, the metropolis of Phrygia (five miles north of Laodicea), the principal seat of the worship of the Great Mother, Cybelê, and famous also as the birthplace of the philosopher Epictetus. To Ephesus, where Paul after his first visit had left his companions from Corinth, Aquila and Priscilla, came Apollos from Alexandria; and a generation later another visitor arrived from Egypt and caused disturbance in the Church, the Gnostic teacher Cerinthus. Many were the voices heard in the city which the philosophic missionary Apollonius of Tyana (in Cappadocia) in the days of Domitian found

'devoted to dances and taken up with pantomimes, full of pipers and noise.' [1] The magicians must not be forgotten. There were strolling exorcists like the seven sons of Sceva, and magicians with books of formulae known as 'Ephesian sentences' for the practice of curious arts, which in the excitement generated by the preaching of the Apostle Paul were voluntarily collected by their owners and publicly burned.[2]

But trade and amusement were not the only interests of the city. Like Jerusalem it was renowned for a majestic temple. 'Great is Artemis of the Ephesians' cried the mob in the theatre, in angry response to the complaint of the silversmith Demetrius that the goddess who was worshipped not only by the whole province of Asia but even all over the world, was being deposed from her magnificence. Greek myths placed her beside Apollo as his twin-sister, and birth-legends were attached to the immediate neighbourhood of the city. In Greece itself she often bore the title 'Saviour,' as the deliverer from some local distress. At Elis she was even designated *Episcopos* ('bishop').[3] But the many-breasted figure of her image at Ephesus pointed to another character, half-Asiatic in origin, which linked her with a nature worship kindred with that of the Great Mother, Cybelê, of Phrygia, and could be traced back further East to Babylon. Many centuries had elapsed since the Ionian Greeks settling along the coast had incorporated her with their own Artemis. Her temple had been rebuilt again and again, and in the days of the Evangelist stood on a raised platform (418 feet in length), supported by a hundred columns. The traveller Pausanias declared it to be the largest in the world. There were crowds of virgins dedicated as priestesses to the goddess, under the superintendence of

[1] 'The life of Apollonius,' says Sir Samuel Dill, *Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius* (1904, p. 346), 'may be a romance . . . yet even a romance must have real facts behind it to give it probability, and the preaching at least of Apollonius seems to belong to the world of reality.' See the translation by F. C. Conybeare (1912), book iv. chap. 2.

[2] Acts xix. 13-20.

[3] Plutarch, *Greek Questions*, 47.

a priest, himself a eunuch,[1] and temple servants. Costly images were often presented made of gold or silver, and adorned with precious stones. On the birthday of the goddess, May 25, they were carried in state-processions round the city, regulated by public decrees, as in an extant inscription of 104 A.D.[2] The orgiastic dances and other features of the cultus aroused the indignation of Apollonius, who was said to have roundly told the frequenters of the sanctuary that their temple was 'just a den of robbers,' and from the steps of the platform pleaded for the study of philosophy to dispel the idleness and arrogance which he saw around him.[3]

The worship of Artemis, however, was not the only religious exercise of Ephesus. Over the whole of the province spread the cultus of the Roman emperor. As early as B.C. 47 Julius Cæsar had received divine honours there as 'God manifest from Ares and Aphroditê, and the common Saviour of the human race'; [4] in the next century temples to Augustus had been erected in all the cities addressed by the Prophet of the Apocalypse except Thyatira,[5] and the proper festivals in honour of the reigning Cæsar were organised by the Asiarchs. Intercourse with Egypt had brought in the worship of Serapis, to whom an altar was dedicated in a court surrounded by small cells for the residence of devotees preparing for initiation. When the local and national religions were breaking down, new objects of adoration were carried from place to place around which fresh hopes were awakened, as sacred rites were devised to secure the higher knowledge of Deity. The conquests of Alexander the Great had opened the way to interchange of thought between East and West; a common language spread from Greece to Egypt, Syria, and Nearer Asia; and the ancient mystery-religions of Hellas found kindred types from alien sources springing up by their side. They were not con-

[1] Bearing the Persian-sounding title of Megabyzus: Gardner, *The Ephesian Gospel*, p. 4.

[2] Wood, *Discoveries at Ephesus* (1877), p. 73.

[3] *Epistles*, lxv; *Life*, iv. 2.

[4] *C.I.G.* ii. 2957.

[5] *Ante*, p. 83.

fined to particular spots, their missionaries could bear them from land to land. The observant Justin, who migrated fron his birthplace in Samaria to Ephesus in the generation following the Fourth Evangelist, noted the variety of forms around which such mysteries gathered, Dionysus, Adonis, Saturn, the Great Mother (sometimes called the Mother of Gods), and Mithra, and pleaded for ' our mysteries ' against them. They sought to bring the worshipper into direct fellowship with God, perhaps by sacred acts, such as baptism and rebirth, or common meals, by prophetic revelations or ceremonies of adoption, by sympathetic identification in which the believer passed through experiences analogous to those of the Deity himself, and thus gained the assurance of immortality.[1] Thus were secrets of knowledge (*gnosis*) communicated to the soul aspiring after heavenly vision. Truth, said Plutarch, contemporary with the Fourth Evangelist, to the Lady Clea, priestess of Isis, is the greatest good for man to receive, and the most venerable gift for God to bestow, for the blessedness of Deity consists in knowledge and understanding.[2]

There was another path to the same goal, harder to tread, though teachers were not wanting. Ever since the days of Heracleitus of Ephesus (500 B.C.) and his elder contemporary Pythagoras of the adjoining island of Samos, the study of philosophy had enlisted the higher thought of Greece. Great cities had their lecturers of various schools. Young men travelled far to hear a famous teacher, and the teacher might himself have gathered experience in different resorts of learning. Plutarch had studied at Athens, had moved on to Alexandria, had visited the cities of Italy and lectured in Rome, before he returned to his native city of Chaeronea in Bœotia and devoted himself to his priesthood, to morals and religion. Driven from Rome when Domitian expelled the philosophers, Epictetus settled at Nicopolis in Epirus, and held up a lofty view of the duty of the

[1] Cp. Angus, *The Mystery Religions and Christianity* (1925), the most comprehensive study now available ; and below, Lect. II, p. 279 ff.

[2] Cp. J. E. C., *Phases of Early Christianity*, pp. 214 ff., 225.

ideal missionary. 'He must know that he is sent as a messenger from Zeus to men concerning things good and evil, to show them that they have gone astray and are seeking the true nature of good and evil where it is not to be found, and take no thought of where it really is.... He approaches all and treats all as a father, as a brother, and as a servant of Zeus, the Father of all.' [1]

This was the character ascribed to Apollonius of Tyana. Sent at the age of fourteen from his country home to school at Tarsus under a professor from Phœnicia, he disliked the city luxury and young men's insolence, and after two years he obtained his father's permission to remove to the small coast town of Aegae, where he lived in the temple of Asclepius and studied under a Pythagorean teacher from Heraclea on the Black Sea. After his father's death, as soon as he came of age he relinquished half his own share of the family property to an elder brother whom he reformed from his drunken ways, distributed the greater part of the rest among needy relatives, and adopted the linen dress, the abstinence from meat and wine, and the simple life of a disciple of Pythagoras. In due time he quitted his temple-sojourn to preach the futility of animal sacrifices and the dedication of costly vases of gold and jewels. Prayer must be simple, the attempt to bribe the gods implied a low idea of Deity; 'Grant me,' was his constant aspiration, 'that which I deserve.' Defending himself before Domitian he declared that good men had something divine in them. Legend, of course, gathered round him. He was a son of Zeus; he could drive out demons; he raised a bride at Rome from the bier; in the Xystus or colonnade at Ephesus he had a strange vision of the assassination of Domitian at the time of its occurrence.[2] He was a frequent visitor there, and in pleading before the Emperor (so his biographer relates) against a charge of magic in delivering the city from a pestilence, found it convenient

[1] *Discourses*, iii. 22, tr. Matheson (1916), vol. ii. pp. 63, 73.

[2] *Life*, book viii. 26. Cp. his discourse in the same place on another occasion on the communism of some sparrows.

to exalt her fame as filled with studious people, philosophers and rhetoricians, with tens of thousands of inhabitants whom she encouraged in wisdom.[1]

Of such teachers Tyrannus, in whose school Paul argued for the Gospel, might have been one. Justin gives us a glimpse of them in a later day in the introduction to his Dialogue with the Jew Trypho. Walking in the groves of the Xystus where philosophers often met their disciples,[2] and still wearing a philosopher's cloak, he was saluted by a Jew, accompanied by a group of friends. Trypho told him that he had escaped from the war in Palestine (which ended in the disastrous failure of the last attempt of his nation to regain their independence under Bar Kokhba as the Messiah, A.D. 135), and had fled to Greece. There he had been advised by a Socratic teacher in Argos to cultivate the society of philosophers, and recognising Justin's character by his dress he ventured to accost him. The conversation turns on the doctrines of the unity and providence of God. Justin describes his own experience, apparently in Ephesus ('our city'), whither he had removed from the little Samaritan home of his birth.[3] He had at first attended a Stoic, then a disciple of Aristotle whom he quitted in consequence of too early a request for the settlement of the fee. He next went to a celebrated Pythagorean who required from his students a good prior training in music, astronomy, and geometry. Unacquainted with these disciplines, and unwilling to spend time in mastering them, he turned to an eminent Platonist —'for their fame was great'—who opened to him the contemplation of ideas and (in Platonic phrase) furnished his mind with wings, so that he expected straightway to look upon God.[4] But one day as he was engaged in

[1] *Ibid.* viii. 7, § 8; cp. *ante*, p. 197.

[2] Identified with Ephesus, Euseb. *Eccl. Hist.* iv. 18.

[3] Flavia Neapolis, the modern Nablous, between Mounts Ebal and Gerizim. The whole story of his progress through the schools is probably a dramatic representation of the relations of philosophy and Christianity; cp. Goodenough, *The Theology of Justin Martyr* (Jena, 1923), p. 58.

[4] A famous Platonist named Albinus was lecturing about this time in Smyrna, where Galen, afterwards the well-known writer on medicine,

solitary meditation in a field near the sea, he fell in unexpectedly with an old man who asked him what philosophy was. 'The knowledge of the Existent,' he replied, 'and the understanding of the True.' But how, asks the old man, can the philosophers judge correctly of God when they have never seen or heard him so as to have knowledge of him? The Deity cannot be seen by the eye, replies Justin, he is apprehended only by the mind. There is a Regal Mind (*Nous Basilikos*), he goes on to explain, which pervades all men and even all living things, and in those who are not hindered by the flesh enables them to see God. The Regal or Ruling Mind thus bears some resemblance to the Stoic Logos, but its presence in the soul does not guarantee its character as unbegotten and immortal which Justin first professes. Under the old man's questions this opinion disappears, Justin is led through the prophets to Christ, and the gates of light are opened to him.

III

The writings of Justin belong to the middle of the second century; the *First Apology* can be dated soon after 150 A.D.; the *Dialogue* about 155 or a few years later. What are the sources of his knowledge of the life and teachings of Jesus? One or two items can be traced to outside tradition, such as that at the baptism a fire was kindled in the Jordan, or that Jesus made ploughs and yokes. With the matter in our Synoptical Gospels he is intimate and familiar. Dr. Drummond has counted 'somewhere

heard him about 152 A.D. Albinus wrote an abstract of the lectures of his own teacher Gaius in nine or ten books, besides an *Introduction to the Platonic Dialogues* and other works. He, too, has a doctrine of the Heavenly or Ruling Mind, which seems to have been in some sense (externally) caused by the Primal Mind or Primal God. In his *Introduction to the Platonic Dialogues* he pleaded that likeness to God is the loftiest aim of human knowledge and action; for the vision of divine things both are needful. Plato traces the whole discipline for the attainment of virtue. The path of enquiry leads in the *Timæus* through the study of nature and the arrangement of the universe. Albinus belongs to the Eclectics, but the foundation of his thought is Platonic. Cp. Freudenthal, *Hellenist. Studien*, Heft 3 (1879), where the text of Hermann, *Platon. Dialogi*, vi. (1851), is printed.

about 170 citations or references ' to what are sometimes called the ' Memoirs of the Apostles.' [1] To these documents no name is attached, but they include matter from all the First Three Evangelists. Did Justin also employ the Fourth ? To this question critics of the front rank give opposite answers. That this should be possible indicates that the evidence is scanty and uncertain. Justin had been converted at Ephesus ; he employs the doctrine of the Logos to explain the nature and work of Christ ; he even names John the Apostle as the author of the Book of Revelation—the only book which he does identify with a particular person. Canon Streeter [2] pleads for ' two quite certain ' reminiscences of the Gospel ; he does not name them, but they are presumably the following :

(1) In describing the ritual of baptism when the candidates were ' born again,' Justin appeals to words of Christ resembling his language to Nicodemus :

1 Apol. lxi.	John iii. 4, 5.
For Christ also said, Unless ye be born again, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. But that it is impossible for those who are once born to enter into the wombs of those who brought them forth, is evident to all.	Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old ? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born ? Jesus answered, Verily verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

That these passages are related is obvious, but it is equally plain that Justin is not exactly reproducing even the words of Christ. The omission of the words ' of water and spirit ' conditioning regeneration is serious ; but, on the other hand, the warning against misinterpreting it as a physical process apparently rests on the question of Nicodemus. The Gospel is in the background and Justin

[1] This figure includes three passages (which are attributed by modern scholars to the Fourth Gospel) without the specification of any source. Drummond, *Inquiry*, etc., p. 100 [1].

[2] *The Four Gospels*, p. 441.

takes no pains to quote it accurately. He meets an anticipated objection with an imperfect reminiscence, which might even be derived conceivably from Church language rather than from a written source.[1]

(2) In the *Dialogue with Trypho* (lxxxviii) Justin relates that when John preached the baptism of repentance, wearing only a leathern girdle and raiment of camel's hair, men supposed him to be the Christ, but he himself cried to them, 'I am not the Christ, but the voice of one crying, for there shall come he who is stronger than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry.' The passage is a curious amalgam, in which the words 'I am not the Christ' can be identified with John i. 20, the rest being echoes of Synoptic phrases (especially Matt. iii. 11, against Mark i. 7 and Luke iii. 16).

Such items do not show any close acquaintance with the Gospel. There is nothing to connect them with the 'Memoirs of the Apostles.' They may be recollections of what Justin had heard in the teaching or worship of the Church. The infrequency of allusion to Johannine doctrine is the more remarkable because of his abundant use of the term Logos whom he describes as a 'second God.' He is the 'First-born of the Unbegotten God' 'who is called an Angel because he announces (*angellei*) to men whatsoever the Creator of the universe wishes.' He was at once unique in rank as God's Only Son (*monogenês*), and yet of a nature in some sense similar to the angels. He is designated an Angel 'because he ministers to God's purpose,' and the angels who follow him and are made like to him are associated with him and the Prophetic Spirit in the worship which is primarily addressed to the most true 'God, the Father of righteousness and temperance and the other virtues.'[2] That Justin in his great argument with Trypho should make no use of a work expressly intended to display Christ as the Son of God and meet the Jewish objections to his claim to that exalted character seems inexplicable if the Gospel had then acquired apostolic authority, unless the book

[1] Cp., for example, Dr. E. A. Abbott, *Encycl. Bibl.* ii. col. 1833.

[2] *Dial.* cxxvii., *Apol.* i. 6. Cp. Goodenough, *op. cit.* p. 156.

were for some reason held in reserve and veiled in mystery.[1]

The letters of Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, written partly from Smyrna and afterwards from Troas, as he was taken by his guards to Rome for martyrdom, are unfortunately undated. The earliest historian of the Church, Eusebius, three hundred years later, placed his death in 108. Controversy now leaves their shorter text unassailed, and they fall within the limits of Trajan's reign, which ended in 117. Antioch, as the capital of Syria, was the third city of the Empire, and had been closely connected with the fortunes of Christianity from the first days. Nicolas, 'a proselyte from Antioch,' was one of the seven men chosen to superintend the daily ministration of food in the infant Church at Jerusalem. In famine-time relief was sent from there to the poor brethren in Judea.[2] Out of the group of the prophets and teachers in the Church came the first mission of Barnabas and Saul, and there the question of table-fellowship with uncircumcised converts became acute. Tradition counted Peter its first bishop and Ignatius third. Coming from a city so intimately associated with Christian interests, Ignatius might have been expected to show some acquaintance with the Fourth Gospel if (as Prof. Burney has recently suggested) it had been actually written there. Or again, if the Apostle John had really survived at Ephesus into the days of Trajan, why should he only tell the church there that he desired to be found in the footsteps of Paul (Eph. xii. 2)? Of the Pauline language there are abundant illustrations, but the characteristic terminology of the Evangelist is absent.[3] Christ is the only Son, it is true, but the word is *monos*, not *monogenḗs*

[1] It is the more significant because he twice quotes Matt. xi. 27.

[2] Acts vi. 5, xi. 30; cp. Gal. ii. 10.

[3] The adjective *ἀληθινός*, 'true,' associated with 'life' (Smyrn. iv. 1, Eph. vii. 2, xi. 1; Trall. ix. 2), has a Johannine ring (cp. below, p. 320), though the Ignatian phrase does not occur in the Gospel. Eucharistic language receives a new application (Rom. vii. 3), 'I desire God's bread which is the flesh of Jesus Christ, and for drink I desire his blood which is love incorruptible,' where *πόμα* corresponds with the Pauline counterpart to *βρῶμα*, 1 Cor. x. 4 (Hebr. ix. 10), as against *πόσις*, John vi. 55 and Rom. xiv. 17. Cp. Lect. VI, p. 427.

(Rom. introd.). He is also God's Logos, 'coming forth from silence' (Magn. viii.), which implies rather the character of Speech or Utterance, than Thought or Reason, so that Ignatius can tell the Romans (ii.) that he is himself 'a Logos of God.' 'Living water' speaks within him and says 'Come to the Father' (*ibid.* vii. 2), but it is in no way identified with the promise to the Samaritan woman, and may quite well have been a phrase of common devotional idiom.[1] When he writes (Philad. vii.) that 'the Spirit is not deceived being from God, for it knoweth whence it cometh and whither it goeth,' the analogy is not to John iii. 8, but rather to the language of Jesus himself (viii. 14), 'I know whence I came and whither I go.'[2] As in the writings of Justin there is a type of thought kindred with the Johannine, but of a Gospel in the sense in which it may be said that he used Matthew 'in something like the present shape,' there is no trace.[3] If, as is quite possible, the Gospel had been written before 110, it cannot be said to have been widely known.

While Ignatius was at Smyrna he was, of course, in close fellowship with its bishop, so much his junior, Polycarp. On his subsequent journey he was received with eager hospitality by the Church at Philippi, from which a request was afterwards sent to Polycarp for help in making a collection of his letters. In forwarding letters which had been received by Polycarp, together with others in his possession, the bishop of Smyrna took occasion to warn the Philippians against certain dangers and disorders affecting their community. The letter contains numerous passages showing acquaintance with New Testament language; and in particular the following passage denounces a special type of false teaching identical with that against which the First Epistle of John is directed.

[1] Justin, *Dial.* lxix., after quoting Isai. xxxv. 5-6, identifies the 'fountain of living water' with Christ; cp. John iv. 10, 14. *Ib.* cxiv. he refers to the Rock which gives 'water of life' (Rev. xxi. 6, xxii. 1, 17.)

[2] Cp. Lect. III, p. 262.

[3] Cp. *The New Test. in the Apostolic Fathers* (Oxford, 1905), p. 79.

Ep. of Polycarp, vii.

Every one that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is Antichrist; and every one that confesseth not the testimony of the cross, is of the devil.

1 John iv. 2-3.

Every spirit which confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; and every spirit which confesseth not Jesus is not of God; and this is the spirit of the Antichrist.

2 John 7.

Many deceivers are gone forth into the world, *even* they that confess not that Jesus Christ cometh in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the Antichrist.

These letters are plainly directed against a common foe. They rise out of a contemporary heresy. The First Letter and the Gospel are so closely connected in thought and language that they cannot be far distant in time or place. Polycarp's letter was called forth by the martyrdom of Ignatius, and may be approximately placed before the end of Trajan's reign. Critical opinion has varied as to the priority or sequence of 1 John in relation to the Gospel, but it is not likely that there was any great interval between them. Numerous delicate indications in the Gospel imply that the Docetic heresy was in sight, and this suggests a date for the Gospel rather after than before 100 A.D.[1]

[1] If it could be established, as some critics have assumed, that the reference in John v. 43 is to the revolt of Bar-Kokhba (132-135 A.D.), the date of the composition of the Gospel could hardly be earlier than 140, and Heitmüller (*Die Schriften des N.-Ts.*,[3] iv. p. 34, 1920) places it between 100 and 140. On the other hand, Prof. Burney (*The Aramaic Origin of the Fourth Gospel*, 1922) proposes 75-80 (p. 128), and locates the Evangelist at Antioch. Canon Streeter suggests a little later date, 90-95, *The Four Gospels*, p. 456. M. Loisy, in the second edition of his Commentary (1921), inclines to the first years of the second century for the main work (i.-xx.), with the addition of xxi. twenty or thirty years later (p. 69). Prof. Maurice Goguel, in his *Introd. au Nouv. Test.* ii. (1924), on the Fourth Gospel (p. 545), contents himself with the limits 90-110. With this view Prof. A. E. Brooke seems to be in accord, Peake's *Commentary* (1919, p. 744). Prof. Stanton also started his consideration of 'pertinent facts' at 90, *The Gospels as Historical Documents*, iii. (1920), p. 147.

IV

By the end of the second century or the beginning of the third a wide-spread tradition ascribed the Fourth Gospel to the Apostle John, the brother of James, and son of Zebedee. Irenæus had heard it in Asia, and as he lectured in Rome in 177 before moving on to Lyons, he had doubtless urged it there, especially as the apostolic authorship was challenged. Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch, knew it in 180. Clement held it at Alexandria and Tertullian at Carthage. The book in passing from land to land in the hands of missionaries and teachers carried this attribution with it. How did it arise, can its origin be traced? As Irenæus is the earliest witness to the authority of the selected Four, it is natural to enquire whence he derived his information.

The name of John appears many times in the *Refutation of all Heresies*,[1] where he is often designated 'the disciple of the Lord.' It is by that title that he is first introduced (i. 8, § 5); and Prof. Burney argues that as he is only called 'apostle' twice, these scanty occurrences must give way to the more frequent usages (fifteen in number) and be ruled out. But it is desirable to notice the connexion in which they respectively appear. Irenæus opens his treatise with a description of the views of the important Gnostic sect of Valentinians, who claim 'John the disciple of the Lord' in support of one of their tenets (i. 8, § 5). This allegation is then set forth in a long quotation from one of their writers,[2] itself opening with the same title, 'John, the disciple of the Lord.' It is in refuting the heretical argument that Irenæus twice describes John as 'the apostle' (i. 9, §§ 2, 3). The term is not a casual mistake, it belongs to the whole conception of Church authority against the pretensions of the Gnostics with their doctrine of a secret tradition imparted privately by Christ to his disciples. Moreover, Irenæus twice uses the

[1] For an analysis of the occurrences see Prof. Burney's treatise, p. 138.

[2] Identified by the Latin translator with Ptolemaeus, cp. i. Pref. § 2.

phrase ' John and the other apostles.' [1] The second of these passages has an indirect bearing on the problem, for it refers to Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, whom Irenæus had heard in his youth, as he tells Florinus, a presbyter at Rome who had fallen into heresy, in a letter preserved by Eusebius.[2]

' I distinctly remember the incidents of that time better than events of recent occurrence ; for the lessons received in childhood, growing with the growth of the soul, become identified with it ; so that I can describe the very place in which the blessed Polycarp used to sit when he discoursed, and his goings out and his comings in, and his manner of life and his personal appearance, and the discourses which he held before the people, and how he would describe his intercourse with John and with the rest who had seen the Lord, and how he would relate their works. And what were the accounts he had from them about the Lord, and about his miracles, and about his teaching ; how Polycarp, as having received them from eye-witnesses of the life of the Word, used to give an account harmonising on all points with the Scriptures. To these (discourses) I used to listen at the time by God's mercy which was bestowed upon me, noting them down, not on paper, but in my heart ; and by the grace of God I constantly ruminate upon them faithfully.'

Polycarp does not himself mention John's name in his letter to the Philippians, nor does he happen to use the term ' Word ' of Christ ; but it has been generally assumed that Irenæus understood him to mean the Apostle ; and it has been further *inferred* that his own statement that ' John the disciple of the Lord, who had also leaned upon his breast, himself published a gospel during his residence in Asia ' rested on information derived from Polycarp. Of this inference, however, there is no proof.

Another line of evidence connects the Gospel with ' John, the disciple of the Lord ' through Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis in Phrygia, author of an *Exposition of the Oracles of the Lord*, which has unfortunately perished. Lightfoot supposed him to have written between the

[1] ii. 22, § 5, and letter to Victor, Bishop of Rome, quoted by Euseb. *Eccl. Hist.* v. 24, § 16, which do not come into Prof. Burney's argument.

[2] *Eccl. Hist.* v. 20.

years 130 and 140, during the youth of Irenæus. Harnack brought down the date some twenty years later, and (such is the uncertainty of the scanty evidence) Dr. Sanday and Professor Burney put it back to 100.[1] Towards the end of his treatise Irenæus deals with the varieties of recompense to be enjoyed hereafter by believers, and recites the testimony of the Elders who were 'disciples of the Apostles' in a passage where elements of Synoptic teaching are supported by the language of the Fourth Gospel:[2]

'As the Elders say, then also shall they which have been deemed worthy of the abode in heaven go thither, while others shall enjoy "the delight of Paradise," and others again shall possess the brightness of the city (*i.e.* the New Jerusalem); for in every place the Saviour shall be seen, according as they shall be worthy who see him. (They say) moreover that this is the meaning of the distinction between the inhabitants of them that bring forth a hundred-fold, and them that bring forth sixty-fold, and them that bring forth thirty-fold; of whom the first shall be taken up into the heavens, and the second shall dwell in Paradise, and the third shall inherit the city; and that therefore our Lord has said, In my Father's house are many mansions.'

It is natural to suppose that these last words refer to John xiv. 2, though it is not necessary to accept a single phrase as proof of the existence of a whole book; it might have come from oral teaching. Who, however, are the Elders, and from what source does Irenæus draw their statements? Critics of different schools unite in tracing them to the formal citation (in a preceding passage, 33, § 4) of 'Papias, a hearer of John, and a companion of Polycarp, in his fourth book.' This John has been described just before (*ibid.* § 3) as 'the disciple of the Lord.' It is apparently the same John who is again specified as the author of the Apocalypse, 'John, the Lord's disciple, says that the New Jerusalem above shall descend as a bride adorned for her husband' (35, § 2).[3] And John,

[1] Prof. B. W. Bacon, *The Gospel of Mark* (1925), p. 37, argues for the decade 140-150. He is thus contemporary with Justin. 'In 150 the Fourth Gospel had not yet appeared above the horizon.'

[2] v. 36, §§ 1-2.

[3] Earlier in the same section Irenæus writes, 'In the Apocalypse John saw,' etc.

once more, at the close of the whole argument (36, § 3), is said to have clearly foreseen 'the first resurrection of the just, and the inheritance in the kingdom of the earth.' To this group of predictions Irenæus evidently assigns the saying 'In my Father's house are many mansions'; it may be ascribed, therefore, with great probability to John 'the disciple of the Lord,' who is thus identified by Papias with both books, the Revelation and the Gospel. But was that John also the son of Zebedee? Irenæus no doubt thought so, and he further supposes Papias to have been his hearer. But Papias himself, so far as is known, makes no such claim, and, as the extracts from his Expositions preserved by Eusebius prove, he explicitly stated at what remove he stood from the original Apostles. This is only one instance of the confusions in which the whole evidence is involved.[1]

The historian Eusebius (in the fourth century) has preserved an interesting passage in which Papias explained his preference for oral testimony compared with the contents of books.[2]

'But I will not scruple also to give a place for you along with my interpretations to everything that I learned carefully and remembered in time past from the Elders, guaranteeing their truth. For, unlike the many, I did not take pleasure in those who have so very much to say, but in those who teach the truth; nor in those who relate foreign commandments, but in those [who record] such as were given from the Lord to the Faith, and are derived from the Truth itself. And again,

[1] These confusions, due to misunderstanding, forgetfulness, ignorance, and the similarity of names ('John' being exceedingly common), find a singular illustration in the early history of the Bâbîs of Persia. The Bâb was executed in 1850. The late Prof. E. C. Browne, who made careful study of their writings and beliefs during a residence in Teheran (*A Year among the Bâbîs*, 1893), was much impressed with two results of his investigations: the rapid growth of varieties of belief (compare, for instance, the Ebionite and Pauline Christologies half a century after the Crucifixion), and the uncertainties of their literary ascriptions. 'The most extraordinary diversity of opinion exists as to doctrines which one would be inclined to regard as fundamental. A similar diversity of opinion prevails as to the authorship of various Bâbî books and poems, though the beginnings of Bâbî literature only go back to 1844 or 1845.' *Materials for the Study of the Bâbî Religion* (1918), p. xxiii.

[2] *Eccl. Hist.* iii. 39. Here, as above, the translation is Lightfoot's.

when any person came [in my way] who had been a follower of the Elders,—what was said by Andrew, or by Peter, or by Philip, or by Thomas or James, or by John or Matthew, or any other of the Lord's disciples, and what Aristion and the Elder John, the disciples of the Lord, say. For I did not think that I could get so much profit from the contents of books as from the utterings of a living and abiding voice.'

Three stages of tradition are here enumerated which must be carefully distinguished: (1) the original Apostolic utterances; (2) their repetition by the Elders; (3) and the repetition of their repetition by Papias's informants. Further, it is widely though not universally agreed that two persons named John are here clearly mentioned separately.[1] The first is plainly the Apostle, brother of James; the second is reckoned as one of the Elders. Recent criticism has been much occupied with indications of a tradition that John the son of Zebedee suffered martyrdom like James. Thus a Syriac calendar of the Church of Edessa, dated 411 A.D.,[2] itself founded on earlier material, after commemorating Stephen on 26th Dec. as the head of the martyrs, attached the names of John and James 'at Jerusalem' to the 27th.[3] The death of James at the hands of Herod Agrippa I. is mentioned by Luke (Acts xii. 2), but the New Testament contains no allusion to the fate of John. The language of the Calendar does not necessarily mean that they perished together. But at this point a statement attributed to

[1] Dr. Nolloth, *The Fourth Gospel* (1925), still identifies the two Johns, p. 61 f. Lord Charnwood frankly writes, 'I start with the disadvantage of not believing that the Elder in question ever existed at all,' *According to St. John*, p. 29. In view of the very severe rebukes which he administers to the 'advanced critics' (Chap. iv.), it is to be regretted that he does not more fully discuss the evidence on which so large a company of students have founded their judgment. If the disparaging estimate of Papias by Eusebius is to be allowed to discredit his statements about persons, it must be remembered that Irenæus, who is the first witness to the Apostolic origin of the Gospel, shared precisely those eschatologic views which Eusebius so much disliked.

[2] Cp. Drummond, *Character and Authorship of the Fourth Gospel*, p. 228 ff.; Burkitt, *The Gospel History and its Transmission* (1906), p. 254. Edessa was in northern Mesopotamia, on a small tributary of the Euphrates.

[3] This is still the day of commemoration of the Evangelist in the Anglican Calendar.

Papias comes down through much later writers, which has in recent study attracted much attention. An epitome (in the seventh or eighth century) based on the copious *Christian History* of Philip of Sidê (on the coast of Pamphylia), a work in thirty-six books written soon after 400 A.D., states that 'Papias in his second book says that John the Divine and James his brother were slain by Jews.'[1] The inexactness in the reference to James, who was not executed by Jews but by Herod Agrippa, involves the inclusion of John in some doubt, and this is not removed by a similar statement in the oldest MS. of the Chronicle of Gregory the Monk (sometimes called 'the Sinner') in the ninth century,[2] which may, however, be founded on independent knowledge of the work of Papias. If John was really put to death by the Jews, he probably perished like James the brother of Jesus at Jerusalem, before the destruction of the city in A.D. 70, and could not have written a Gospel at Ephesus.[3]

Now our New Testament contains three letters attributed to John, closely allied with each other and with the Gospel.[4] They bear no name, but the second and third are addressed to different persons by 'the Elder.' Either the name of the Elder has been dropped, or the title was sufficiently distinctive at the time and in the community to which he belonged to render its condition unnecessary. Irenæus, for example, calls Polycarp of Smyrna, otherwise known as bishop, 'that blessed and apostolic Elder';[5] and in writing to Bishop Victor he uses the same term to describe the series of presidents of the Church in Rome.[6] Is it not possible that the Elder was the pastor or bishop of the Church at Ephesus, whose eminence and authority rendered further designation needless? The *Apostolical*

[1] *Texte und Untersuchungen*, v. (1888), p. 170; Preuschen, *Antilegomena* [2] (1905), p. 94.

[2] First published in 1862; cp. Preuschen, *ibid.* p. 95.

[3] Hegesippus, a Jewish convert in the second century, whose detailed account of the martyrdom of James, the Lord's brother, is cited by Eusebius, *Eccl. Hist.* ii. 23, does not seem to have mentioned the death of John. Eusebius, of course, followed the Ephesian tradition.

[4] See below, Epilogue, p. 458.

[5] Eusebius, *Eccl. Hist.* v. 20, § 7. [6] *Ibid.* v. 24, §§ 14, 16.

Constitutions of a later day contain a curious tradition of unknown origin concerning bishops ordained by apostles. 'Of Ephesus, Timothy, ordained by Paul, and John by me John.' Here are the Apostle and the Elder in close contact. The next name is 'of Smyrna, Ariston.'[1] But how could he and John the Elder have been disciples of Jesus? They are apparently still living, Papias is glad to collect what 'they say.' The testimony of the Jerusalem Apostles can only be gathered from the Elders who followed them. Papias is not himself one of their hearers, he is of another generation. If the Gospel is ascribed to a living Elder, he cannot have been a personal follower of Jesus. Papias could fall into dire confusion, for Irenæus reproduces on his authority the most extravagant predictions of the future fertility of Palestine, derived through the Elders from John, the disciple of the Lord.

'The Elders who saw John, the disciple of the Lord, related that they had heard from him how the Lord used to teach in regard to these times, and say: The days will come in which vines shall grow, each having ten thousand branches, and in each branch ten thousand twigs, and in each true twig ten thousand shoots, and in each one of the shoots ten thousand clusters, and on every one of the clusters ten thousand grapes, and every grape when pressed will give five and twenty metretes of wine. . . . And these things are attested in writing by Papias.'[2]

To the same Elders does Irenæus appeal (presumably in the records of Papias) in support of his conclusion that the teaching ministry of Jesus lasted nearly twenty years. After arguing on general grounds that he who was to save all must have himself passed through every stage of life,

[1] vii. 46. Ariston is probably the same as the Aristion of Papias, to whom the Roman Martyrology, Feb. 22, attributes the statement that Aristion had been one of the Seventy Disciples (Luke x. 1), the symbol of the world-wide purpose of Christianity. Cp. Bacon in Hastings' *Dict. of Christ*, art. 'Aristion-Aristo.'

[2] Irenæus, v. 33, 3, 4. This outdoes the description in the *Apocalypse of Baruch* (tr. Charles), xxix. 5. 'The earth will yield its fruit ten thousand-fold, and on one vine there will be a thousand branches, and each branch will produce a thousand clusters, and each cluster will produce a thousand grapes,' etc. It is not surprising that Judas should ask how such wonders could be brought about.

must have been a child for children and an old man for old men, Irenæus invokes the testimony of John (by whom he no doubt means the son of Zebedee) and the Elders of Asia against the heretics who wished to limit his public career to one year (ii. 22, § 5).

'From the fortieth and fiftieth year a man begins to decline towards old age, in which condition our Lord continued teaching, as the gospel and all the Elders who were conversant in Asia with John the disciple of the Lord, testify that John had handed down these things. For he remained among them up to the times of Trajan. Some of them, moreover, saw not only John, but other apostles also, and heard the very same account from them, and bear testimony concerning this report. Whom, then, should we rather believe? Such men as these, or Ptolemæus who never saw any apostles?'[1]

Whom should we rather believe? It is a weighty question, and the incongruous data of Papias and Irenæus inevitably throw doubts upon other items of their evidence. The absence of any other allusion to the martyrdom of the Apostle, and the erroneous reference of the death of James to the Jews in the statement attributed to Papias, warn us against a too ready acceptance of the tradition.[2] On the other hand, Eusebius mentions that he 'used testimonies' from the First Epistle of John, though the Gospel is not named.[3] Assuming at present without further discussion the identity of authorship between the letters and the Gospel, the title Elder distinctly points away from 'Apostle,' to which a higher authority would surely have been attached. In the group of transmitters of apostolic traditions Papias names an Elder, John, and does not include him in the previous group of 'disciples of the Lord' who had belonged to the original group of the Twelve. Though Eusebius does not

[1] Cp. Lect. V, p. 370.

[2] Other items also suggest caution. As quoted by the Epitomator of Philip of Sidê, Papias referred to persons who were raised by Christ from the dead and lived on into Hadrian's reign.

[3] *Eccl. Hist.* iii. 39, 16. When the disparaging estimate of Papias by Eusebius is quoted to discredit his testimony, it must be remembered that Irenæus (on whom the identification of John with the son of Zebedee primarily rests) accepted without hesitation the millennarian traditions which aroused the historian's dislike.

quote from Papias any reference to the Fourth Gospel, he does cite from him an interesting statement by the Elder about the origin of Mark's Gospel, and its lack of 'order' (*ibid.* 39, 15). The implication is that there was some other standard according to which it could be judged and found wanting. If the Elder was himself the author of our Gospel, and was also a collector of traditions, he might be dissatisfied with the meagreness of the Marcan record while he had himself such abundance of material from which to make his selection.[1] But if the book was the composition of an Elder whose living testimony was still available, he could not have been 'a disciple of the Lord.' The title is apparently applied in just the same sense as in the previous enumeration of the original Apostles. There does not seem any justification for extending it over a wider group of believers in a later generation. There is some slight indication that the words were not in the earliest Syriac and Armenian versions, and the historian Mommsen unhesitatingly argued that they must be struck out.[2] For those who accept the Gospel and the three Letters as the work of one writer, the way is open for their ascription to the Ephesian Elder who may have been Bishop of the Church in Ephesus like Polycarp in Smyrna. This identification of the Evangelist and the Elder has been widely accepted, both in this country and on the continent. But it leaves us without any information about the Elder's personality, unless with Dr. Garvie and Prof. Burney we can see

[1] This has been emphasised by Heitmüller, in his elaborate essay, *Zeitschr. für N.T. Wissenschaft* (1914), p. 189 ff. I cannot accept the fundamental assumption of the German School that the language of Jesus in Mark x. 39 was shaped to match the event, and was repeated by Matthew with the same reference. Luke, it is supposed, having no authority to associate John with James in Acts xii. 2, omitted the whole story. The inference that the brothers perished together is wrecked on the statement of Paul that he saw John at Jerusalem (Gal. ii. 9). What chronology can bring that visit into the year 44? Prof. Heitmüller is less confident in his latest treatment, *Schriften des N.Ts.*[3] (1920), iv. p. 34, where he allows a margin from 100-140 (if v. 43 refers to Bar Kokhba), and does not press the authorship of the Elder.

[2] *Z.N.T.W.* (1902), p. 158. Cp. Moffatt, *Introduction to the N.T.* (1911), p. 600, whose masterly review of the whole evidence is still by far the fullest discussion of the entire problem. The words might conceivably have been added by a later copyist.

through or in him ' the Beloved Disciple.' [1] The remark of the Bishop of Gloucester concerning the alleged early death of the son of Zebedee seems equally true all round : ' I do not think the arguments convincing, but they throw much uncertainty over the whole problem.' [2]

Enquiry into the external evidences of authorship must be subordinate to the study of the Gospel itself.

[1] Prof. B. W. Bacon, *The Gospel of Mark* (1925), p. 39, still repeats his conjectural identification of the Elder with John, enumerated by Eusebius as seventh in a succession of fifteen bishops of Jerusalem up to its destruction in 135 (*Eccl. Hist.* iv. 5, 3). The relation of the Gospel to Hellenistic thought seems to render this highly unlikely.

[2] *The Life and Teaching of Jesus the Christ* (1923), p. 38. As all possibilities should be kept in mind it may be suggested that, if the statements attributed to Papias are rejected as untrustworthy, in spite of the silence of writers before Irenæus, the Apostle John might have died in Ephesus before the end of the first century, and the Gospel might have been written ten years or more later by the Elder. It must be remembered that John was a very common name, and a large city like Ephesus might have provided two writers of distinction, the Elder and the Prophet, in the same Church. Eusebius refers to a tradition (*Eccl. Hist.* iii. 39, mentioned again in an extract from Dionysius, Bishop of Alexandria, vii. 25) that there were two tombs in Ephesus, and it has been conjectured that these commemorated the Apostle and the Elder. Irenæus has a story related by hearers of Polycarp that John ' the disciple of the Lord ' (the context shows that he means the Apostle) rushed out of a bath-house at Ephesus when he found Cerinthus inside (iii. 3, 4). An anecdote of this kind, once lodged in tradition, might easily be attributed to the wrong John, the Apostle being the more distinguished (it reappears much later attached to the mythical ' Ebion,' cp. Lect. II, p. 262). But Polycarp might conceivably have heard it at Ephesus and passed it on with or without the correct identification. All these uncertainties throw the investigator back on the Gospel itself.

LECTURE I

ORIGIN AND CHARACTERISTICS

The enquiry into the authorship of the Fourth Gospel is so far enveloped in uncertainty. If the statement attributed to Papias concerning the martyrdom of John the son of Zebedee be accepted, the book cannot have been written by him; and if the three nameless letters are identified with it, the Evangelist bore the title Elder whether as an eminent Church official or as a venerated leader in the Ephesian circle. Of such an Elder in the generation following the Apostles, himself named John, there are distinct traces. That tradition, represented by Irenæus, should have confused him with the Apostle, is not altogether surprising in the face of similar mistaken identifications. James, John's brother, was wrongly confounded by Irenæus himself with James, 'the Lord's brother,' and in the next century by so great a scholar as Origen. Clement, Paul's fellow-worker at Philippi (Phil. iv. 3), and Linus (2 Tim. iv. 21), were further assimilated by Irenæus with bishops of Rome, while Origen credited Hermas (Rom. xvi. 14) with the authorship of the Shepherd.[1] Philip, the Evangelist of Samaria (Acts viii. 5, xxi. 8), who afterwards became Bishop of Hierapolis, was transformed by the Ephesian Polycrates, a contemporary of Irenæus, into Philip the Apostle.[2] Such instances make it easy to understand that Justin should have attributed the Apocalypse which proclaims its

[1] These instances are quoted by Prof. Walter Bauer, *Das Johannes-Evangelium* (1925), p. 236.

[2] This is repeated by Eusebius, *Eccl. Hist.* iii. 39, 9.

composition by a prophet named John[1] to the son of Zebedee. In this conflict of testimony it remains to examine the Gospel itself. Does it throw any light upon its own origin, or provide any clues to the sources which its author employed? When his narrative is compared with the First Three, what account can be given of their differences, or of the writer's purpose in its preparation? Everyone knows that these questions have been asked of late with increasing insistence, and with a wide variety of answers. Some illustrations of these indications are here offered.[2]

I

It may be noted first of all that the Gospel as it comes to us has received additions which can be actually traced in our manuscripts. They may be on a small scale, as in viii. 59, where the words 'and going through the midst of them' in the Authorised Version seem to have been added by a reminiscence of Luke iv. 30, and are absent from the older texts. The picturesque description of the cripple at Bethesda waiting for the angel of the Lord to trouble the water belongs to the hand of a later artist, as the Revisers' margin shows. The most conspicuous illustration of this process is, of course, the story of the woman taken in adultery (vii. 53-viii. 11), when Jesus compels her accusers to convict themselves. It is one of the jewels of the Gospel, but it is almost unanimously recognised that this could not have been its original setting. Its style resembles the Synoptic traditions, but its source is unknown. The 'Expositions' of Papias apparently contained a story of a woman brought before Jesus accused of many sins, related in the Gospel according to the Hebrews, but the reference by the historian Eusebius (iii. 39, 16) is not sufficiently detailed to secure the identification.[3]

[1] *Ante*, p. 41.

[2] For a long and comprehensive list of authors who have discussed various literary phenomena in the Gospel, see Clemen, *Die Entstehung des Johannes-Evangeliums* (1912), p. 3 ff.

[3] It is not even clear whether Papias quoted the story from the Gospel, or whether Eusebius only means that it could also be found there.

If such insertions could be made two centuries or more after the Gospel was written, it may have received others on the way. That the last chapter is an appendix has been very generally admitted. The words of xx. 30, 31, are an obvious close :

> Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book ; but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Son of God ; and that believing ye may have life in his name.

But to what book is this passage the conclusion ? Observing that the public ministry of Jesus is brought to a close at the end of chap. xii., and no more signs are performed in the privacy of the supper-room or the moments of the arrest (the severed ear of Malchus, xviii. 10, is not restored to him, cp. Luke xxii. 51), Mr. J. M. Thompson boldly proposed to transfer these words to the end of the first great division of the book, and then argued that the scene by the Lake of Tiberias was the Evangelist's fitting sequel to the appearances of Jesus in Jerusalem.[1] The suggestion has not met with support. But there is no agreement about the author of xxi.,[2] or the circumstances under which it was added. What interval elapsed before it was attached to the preceding narrative ? [3] What was the writer's purpose in placing it there ? And is it all of one piece ? A confirmatory statement (ver. 24) has long been accepted as appended to the appendix ; and the last verse of all, written in the singular number, and wanting in the Sinaitic Codex, has the air of an editorial farewell.[4]

Here is sufficient evidence to prove that the Gospel as it reaches us is the result of a process of unknown length, in which more than one hand has taken part. Many

[1] *The Expositor*, vol. x. (1916), p. 139.

[2] Was it the Evangelist himself, or (as has been often conjectured) the writer of 1 John (presumably the Elder) ?

[3] A very small piece of evidence may be worth noting. According to the geographer Furrer, *Z.N.T.W.* (1902), p. 261, the name Tiberias only came into use in the second century. In vi. 1 it is attached as an explanatory gloss to the name Sea of Galilee. By the date of the appendix it is established as the common designation.

[4] It is omitted by Tischendorf and Blass. Cp. Canon Streeter, *The Four Gospels* (1924), p. 430.

peculiarities point in the same direction. May it not be the case that other insertions have been made at different points in the narrative, which may account for curious dislocations of time and place, and incongruities of teaching? Early in this century Prof. H. H. Wendt of Jena presented the book as the product of a first-hand report of the discourses of Jesus arranged in a narrative of secondary value. Other German scholars, Schwarz, Wellhausen, Spitta, took up the task, sought to extricate a *Grundschrift* or 'foundation-document,' and trace the steps by which the Gospel acquired its present shape. English students have adventured on the same enterprise. Dr. Strachan,[1] Dr. Garvie,[2] and Mr. Macgregor,[3] have all recognised diversity of elements in the book, and ascribe its final form to a Redactor's labour. They may differ in the distribution of its contents, and may give the preference of originality of testimony to its narrative scheme or to its reports of discourse. But they agree in the principle that the great story must be tested first of all by its own statements, and that behind the traditional assumptions of its authorship investigation is justified in seeking to explain its origin.

The reader who takes the Gospel in hand as a book of Devotion probably meditates only on a limited portion at a time, and his attention is not called to the connexion of one chapter with another. Nor does he notice small statements, explanatory or reminiscent, which often have the air of later additions, such as the identification of the Sea of Tiberias with the Sea of Galilee, already noticed.[4] Such is the doubtful clause, iv. 9, 'for Jews have no dealings with Samaritans,' and possibly the correction in ver. 2 (introduced by a conjunction which occurs nowhere else), or the interpretation in ii. 21, 22; or, again, the words 'For the poor ye have always with you' (xii. 8),

[1] *The Fourth Gospel, its Significance and Environment*, by R. H. Strachan (1917), and *The Fourth Evangelist* (1925), chap. iii.

[2] *The Beloved Disciple, Studies in the Fourth Gospel*, by Alfred E. Garvie (1922).

[3] Papers by G. H. C. Macgregor in the *Expositor*, August 1922, March 1923.

[4] *Ante*, p. 220.

apparently brought over from Matt. xxvi. 11 (cp. Mark xiv. 7, and omitted by the Eastern Sinaitic Syriac, and the Western Codex Bezae D). Critics will naturally differ as to the extent of such literary touches, and Mr. Macgregor assigns to his Redactor much which Dr. Garvie ascribes to his Evangelist, or even to his original Witness.[1] The narrative of the feeding of the five thousand (vi.) has long been a source of perplexity. It is plainly based upon the corresponding incident in Synoptic tradition, but it is enriched with a discourse to which no previous Gospel has any parallel, pointing forward to the mystery of the sacramental bread. Its connexion with the story of the healing of the paralytic and the controversy founded upon it in v. is of the slightest. The loose formula 'after these things' supplies no explanation of the sudden transition from Jerusalem to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, which would have been less violent when Jesus had already left Judea (iv. 54). It has been often suggested, therefore, that vi. might have originally preceded v.; and this opened the way for another restoration of dislocated connexion. In v. 18 the Jews are represented as seeking to kill Jesus for breaking the Sabbath. After the Passover has gone by in Galilee (vi. 4), and Jesus is again in Jerusalem at the feast of tabernacles in September (vii. 2), the controversy is resumed. It had broken off (v. 47) with Jesus' appeal to Moses. At vii. 15 the Jews enquire how an uneducated man could argue about the Scriptures. The reply of Jesus (ver. 19), 'why seek ye to kill me?' refers to v. 18, and the allusion to the cure of the cripple (ver. 23) as something which has just taken place so that his opponents are still filled with astonishment (ver. 21), is quite inappropriate after an interval of six months.

[1] By way of comparison I subjoin the two lists of Dr. Garvie and the late distinguished German critic, Prof. Bousset, who maintained the unity of the book against the disruptive theories of Schwartz and Wellhausen; cp. his article in the *Theologische Rundschau* (1910), and in *Religion der Geschichte und Gegenwart*, vol. iii (1912). He assigned the following to the Glossator (*p.* 617), i. 15, 24, 28; ii. 17?, 21, 22; iii. 24; iv. 2, 8; vi. 36, 39b, 40, 44b; vii. 39; x. 6?; xi. 2, 18?; xii. 6, 33; xiii. 11, 34 f.; xviii. 5b? 9 (cp. xvii. 12); xviii. 32; xx. 20a.

Dr. Garvie's Redactor operates on a larger scale; small items are ignored, and he is credited with iv. 43-54?; vi.; xii. 20-36; xiii. 36-38; xviii. 17-18, 25-27; xix. 35; xxi.

The sequence of vii. 15-24 on the reference to Moses (v. 47) has been often admitted, but the precedence of vi. before v. is more doubtful. In the connexion of the discourse on the consumption of the sacred body and blood with the impending passover the Evangelist seems to look onwards to the last supper ; and if the words of Peter (vi. 68, 69) are the Johannine equivalent, as is often supposed, of Peter's confession near Caesarea Philippi (which Luke places immediately after the scene in the wilderness, though without naming the spot, ix. 20), the Galilean ministry is terminated much too early, and the Gospel chronology is still further confused. It is not surprising, then, that it should be proposed to treat chap. vi. as an independent piece which has found lodgment in the story at an unfitting place.[1]

If the possibility of accidental dislocation or of intentional insertion is once admitted, the way is opened for the consideration of the composition of the Gospel from a fresh point of view. There may be more than one such piece of independent discourse. For example, in xii. 44-50 a detached utterance is ascribed to Jesus after he has a second time mysteriously vanished (xii. 36 ; cp. viii. 59). The Evangelist has summed up the results of his labours in Jerusalem, and quoted a favourite prophetic explanation of their failure to win belief, when the voice of Jesus is heard once more—independent of place or time—in a sort of farewell echo of his mission floating through the temple halls from which he had for ever disappeared. A more conspicuous example is seen in the moving picture of the vine and the branches (xv.-xvi.), and the prayer of self-consecration for himself and his disciples (xvii.). The exquisite tenderness of his bequest of peace to his followers closes the intimate communion around the supper-table ; he has just warned them that he will no more speak much with them (xiv. 30) : and with the words which Peter's reminiscence recalled when he was awakened in the garden, ' Arise, let us go hence ' (xiv. 31 ; cp. Mark

[1] So Prof. Stanton, *The Gospels as Historical Documents*, iii. (1920), p. 69 ; Garvie, p. 43 ff. Many critics have pointed out peculiarities in the discourse. See Lect. VI, p. 420.

xiv. 42), Jesus leads the way out of the chamber. That another discourse should follow, with a second solemn close and gift of peace (xvi. 33), to be in its turn succeeded by the far-reaching petition for all future believers, seems incongruous with the historic situation, and implies either a complete indifference to the succession of events upon the fatal night, or the existence of separate devotional materials which have not been completely harmonised.[1] Narrative materials in the same way jostle one another in the combination of the trials before Annas and Caiaphas, and the three denials of Peter (xviii. 12-27).[2]

The general unity of both style and thought which marks the Gospel renders it difficult if not impossible to trace consecutive documents through it such as present themselves in the Pentateuch. But scattered hints may be discovered which reinforce the view to which the existence of separate insertions seems to point. The language of Jesus in v. 19-29 is conspicuous for the repeated description of himself as 'the Son.' 'Verily, verily I say unto you,[3] The Son can do nothing of himself'; but in ver. 30 a new discourse begins, 'I can do nothing of myself.' The peculiar use of the term 'the Son' appears sporadically elsewhere,[4] but in the passage just named its continued recurrence is unusual, and it is complicated by language concerning judgment and resurrection (vv. 25-29) which seems to embrace different eschatological conceptions, and is not congruous with other passages.[5] Again,

[1] Others suggest the transposition of 15-16 to some point in 13, but differ about the place of insertion. Among recent critics the historian Prof. Edward Meyer emphatically urges the independence of 15-17.

Chap. xvii. may also be regarded as a separate discourse after the impressive close in xvi. 33. A small peculiarity of style may be noted. There are two words meaning to send, ἀγγέλλω and πέμπω, sometimes used in close juxtaposition, *e.g.* v. 36, 38 and 37; xx. 21, or at greater intervals vi. 29, 57 and vi. 38, 39, 44. In 13-16 only πέμπω occurs, xiii. 20, xiv. 24, xv. 21, xvi. 5; in 17 only ἀποστέλλω, xvii. 3, 18, 21, 23, 25. Such a marked difference of usage seems to point to a different source.

[2] Cp. Moffatt, *Introd. to N.T.* (1911), p. 557.

[3] A formula peculiar to the Gospel (twenty-five times).

[4] Cp. iii. 17, 35, 36; vi. 40; viii. 36; xiv. 13; xvii. 1: altogether seventeen times.

[5] Cp. Lect. VI p. 442.

in the successive accounts of the attempts to arrest Jesus in the temple (vii. 30, 32, 44) different versions of a common incident seem to be combined.

The view that emerges from these and kindred difficulties is reinforced by the references to a group of believers who bear their testimony to the solemn experiences which the Gospel describes and enshrines. 'We beheld his glory, full of grace and truth'; 'of his fulness we all received' (i. 14, 16). The declaration of the First Letter is equally explicit: 'That which was from the beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, . . . declare we unto you' (i. 1-3). Here is the language of a religious fellowship. A community, bound together by common trusts, sharing a common worship, practising a certain rule of mutual love, embodies its faith in these documents. So complete is the union of its members with their heavenly Lord that they can represent him as speaking by anticipation in their name. In the secret colloquy with Nicodemus under cover of night Jesus appeals to the experience which he has himself generated, 'Verily, verily, I say unto thee, we speak that we do know, and bear witness of that we have seen' (iii. 11). The voice is that of the Church proclaiming its precious truth, and the sad sequel, 'and ye receive not our witness,' addressed to the solitary enquirer sums up the resistance of a hostile world. In such a fellowship a peculiar type of teaching would be evolved, sometimes founded on elements of Synoptic story, sometimes designed to meet objections from critics or opponents, sometimes depicting the most intimate relations of the Master and his disciples. Every Church probably had its group of teachers, sometimes differing in modes of thought and expression from one another, just as prophets might differ in their visions. The Johannine type would constitute a marked variety. As the body of utterances grew more and more copious and distinct beside the Gospels already in use—the Memoirs of the Apostles so often cited by Justin—the desire would naturally arise to record them, and in doing so to frame some corresponding picture of the activity of the Christ, the Son of God. For

this purpose materials of several kinds would be gathered together, and a consecutive narrative constructed founded on a common conception of Jesus' word and work. The order of events, the duration of his ministry, would be determined beforehand ;[1] and the contributions would thus be organised into a literary unity. One writer would naturally be entrusted with this task. If subsequent additions were made to incorporate some fresh product of meditation, or embody some tradition not hitherto recognised, the connexion thus effected might not exactly fit, but the total harmony would not be seriously impaired.[2] Of such co-operative authorship a faint and fantastic trace may possibly be recognised towards the end of the second century in the Latin fragment known as the Muratorian Canon, contemporary with Irenæus. It begins abruptly, having presumably first accounted for the preceding three : 'Of the fourth of the Gospels, John, one of the disciples * * * * To his fellow-disciples and bishops exhorting [him] he said, Fast with me for three days from to-day ; and whatsoever shall have been revealed to each, let us relate it to one another. On the same night it was revealed to Andrew [one] of the apostles, that, all reviewing, John should write down all things in his own name.' The assistance of others is here plainly implied. About the same time Clement of Alexandria quotes the 'tradition of the Elders from the first' to the following effect : 'John, however, last, having observed that the bodily things had been exhibited in the Gospels, being exhorted by his friends, inspired by the Spirit, produced a spiritual Gospel.'[3] There is, it is true, no hint here that John's friends themselves provided any reminiscences, but there is nothing to forbid it. The meaning of the contrast between the 'bodily' and the 'spiritual' is well known. It corresponds to the

[1] Cp. Lect. V, p. 368.

[2] This suggestion was originally made in a paper by the Rev. Charles Hargrove, M.A., read to the Society of Historical Theology at Oxford in November 1892. Cp. J. E. C., *The Bible in the Nineteenth Century* (1903), p. 415 ; Bousset, *Rel. in Gesch. und Gegenwart*, iii. (1912), col. 616, § 2b, end.

[3] Euseb. *Eccl. Hist.* vi. 14, 7. Cp. Drummond, pp. 75, 32.

distinction between the literal or historical and the symbolic or allegorical.

There remains, however, the attestation of members of the Fellowship at the close of the Appendix (xxi. 24). 'This is the disciple which beareth witness of these things, and wrote these things; and we know that his witness is true.' Who is the disciple? The tradition of the Church for centuries has identified him with the Apostle. Only recently has he been found in the Elder. Of this alternative what explanation can be given? Before seeking an answer to these questions, let us consider other peculiarities of the Gospel itself.

II

As it is admitted on all hands that it is the latest of the Four, it is natural to enquire whether the writer made any use of its predecessors. With many differences of detail the Synoptic narratives are arranged upon a common scheme first (as is now well established) presented in written form in Mark. Luke alone alludes to earlier attempts to tell the sacred story, but neither he nor Matthew, though they both employed Mark with the utmost freedom, gives any hint of this or any other significant source. John writes with extraordinary independence, but his object—to prove that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God—is the same. The form of the story, from the ministry of the Baptist to the final scenes, is already provided. Jesus comes from Nazareth of Galilee; he has a mother named Mary, and brothers who do not believe in him. He gathers disciples, though no list is ever offered of their names; they are never called apostles (though they are said to have been 'chosen' and 'sent,' xiii. 16, xv. 16, xvii. 18), and are rarely reckoned as twelve.[1] Jesus himself makes no preaching circuits among the synagogues of Galilee, nor are the disciples ever commissioned to proclaim that the kingdom of heaven is at hand. The healing activity of Jesus is not shared

[1] Three times in vi, one of the peculiar additions to the Gospel, vv. 67, 70, 71, and xx. 24; cp. Mark (11); Matt. (8), cp. xix. 28; Lk. (7), cp. xxii. 30.

with them; they are his witnesses, but not his fellow-workers. After the discourse on the sacred mystery of the body and the blood following the feeding of the multitude, Peter avows his faith in the Teacher who possesses the words of eternal life. It is commonly regarded as the Johannine equivalent of his recognition of Jesus as the Messiah on the way to Caesarea Philippi; but the crisis is entirely different in origin, nature, and expression. The two lines of narrative do not meet again till the entry into Jerusalem. The transference of the expulsion of the money-changers to the first visit of Jesus leads to the necessity of providing a new motive for priestly opposition, which is found in political apprehension of a challenge to the Roman power (xi. 48). After the farewell meal the tragedy moves swiftly on the traditional lines, with deep divergences of detail. The treachery of Judas, the arrest in the garden, the three-fold denials of Peter, the trial and condemnation, the sentence of Pilate, the last hours on the cross, the burial and the resurrection, all follow their appointed course, but with what profound variations of spirit! Amid all the similarity of outward incident it might be the story of another Being.

Without a narrative of the birth the Gospel starts like Mark with the appearance of the Baptist,[1] and most points of phraseological contact occur with that Gospel. In the freedom with which the Fourth Evangelist remoulds earlier material, a few words are borrowed by him from the story of the cripple let down by his bearers into the crowd below, to describe the cure of the paralytic at the pool of Bethesda.

Mark ii. 11, 12.	John v. 8, 9.
Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thy house. And he arose, and straightway *took up the bed* and went forth before them all.	*Arise, take up thy bed* and walk. And straightway the man was made whole, and *took up his bed* and walked.[2]

[1] On the relation of the Prologue to i. 6-8, 15; cp. Lect. III, p. 319 f.

[2] The word 'bed' in these passages is a vulgar word replaced by one more polite in Matt. and Luke. The Greek adverbs 'straightway' are not identical, but are derived from the same adjective (not in Matt. or Luke).

It is hardly necessary to dwell on what is matter of general agreement among critics of different schools. What is significant is that the echoes of the Master's teaching are so few. Thus when Jesus replies to Andrew and Philip, who have told him the wish of certain Greeks to see him, he makes no allusion to their request but dwells on the meaning of his own approaching death, and adds, 'He that loveth his life loseth it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal' (xii. 25). The words hold a faint echo of the solemn warning after the announcement of his own fate (Mark viii. 35), 'Whosoever would save his life shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake [and the Gospel's] shall save it.' To those who 'serve' him he promises a share in his own glory, and honour from his Father (ver. 26). The Jesus of Mark does not call for his followers to 'serve' him—he has himself come to 'serve' others, cp. John xii. 26, Mark viii. 34, x. 45, Luke xxii. 27. Brief phrases such as 'the servant is not greater than his lord,' John xiii. 16, xv. 20, point a contrast like that in Matt. x. 24. But they may easily have been heard in Church preaching, and cannot be definitely quoted as dependent on literary contact.

Familiarity with Matthew is not securely made out.[1] The points of resemblance are few and uncertain. The deputation of priests and Levites sent from Jerusalem by the Pharisees (John i. 19, 24) may correspond to the Pharisees and Sadducees whom Matthew reports among the Baptist's hearers (iii. 7). Matthew, like John, connects the ass on which Jesus rode into Jerusalem with the prophecy of Zechariah (Matt. xxi. 4, 5; John xii. 14, 15); and both Evangelists use the formula of 'fulfilment,' though not in the same connexions.[2] John, it may be added, like Matthew, records an appearance of Christ after his death in Galilee; its locality, however, is different, and its object is only in part the same.[3]

[1] In spite of the confident assertion of Edward Meyer, *op. cit.* i. 332 Cp. Streeter, p. 408 ff.

[2] John xii. 38; xiii. 18; xv. 25; xvii. 12, cp. xviii. 32; xix. 24, 36; cp. Mark xiv. 49.

[3] Cp. below, p. 246 ff.

The acquaintance of the Evangelist with Luke seems to be fairly established.[1] He tells of the sisters Martha and Mary,[2] and knows of Martha's hospitable service to her guest (xii. 2 ; cp. Luke x. 14). Following the Marcan tradition he places the unction of Jesus at Bethany, but diverges from his predecessor in locating it in the house of Martha and Mary instead of that of Simon the leper. The woman with the 'ointment of spikenard' very costly [3] is identified with Mary, and she, in her turn, is identified with the woman which was a sinner in the Pharisee's house (Luke vii. 38), for like her she anointed not the head of the Teacher (Mark xiv. 3) but his feet, and wiped them with her hair. The significance of the act is indeed lost. The Pharisee had provided no water for his guest's feet, and the woman therefore rained her tears upon them *before* anointing them ; it was not necessary to do so afterwards. The disciples' complaint is fathered upon Judas, who takes their place in Mark's story with the objection that the ointment might have been sold for three hundred pence (Matthew omits the specification of the price), and Jesus' reply connects the act (as in Mark) with preparation for his burial.[4] There are broader features which point in the same direction. The fishing scene (John xxi.) appears to continue the allegory on which Luke's transformation of the Marcan story of Peter's call is founded.[5] Luke, moreover, anticipates the

[1] In spite of Prof. Stanton's dissent : John knew the Gospel of Mark 'fairly well ; that he knew either of the others seems more than doubtful,' *op. cit.* iii. p. 220.

[2] Though Mary is named first in xi. 1, it is clear that the practical Martha is the head of the household, vv. 5, 19, 39 ; xii. 2.

[3] The two words in Mark xiv. 3 and John xii. 3 may go back to the same Aramean.

[4] The connexion is obscure. How was Mary to 'keep' it for a future event ? It is implied that it had not all been expended, although the perfume filled the house. John omits the prediction that the woman's action shall be commemorated wherever the Gospel is preached through the whole world. In the Evangelist's method of teaching by symbols is it possible that the prophetic promise is represented by the diffusion of the perfume throughout the whole house (cp. Loisy *in loc.*) ? It may be noted further that Luke alone of the Synoptics ascribes the treachery of Judas to the entry of Satan ; cp. xxii. 3, John xiii. 2 and 27.

[5] Cp. below, p. 246.

evangelisation of the Gentile world by the journey of Jesus (heralded by seventy disciples) through Samaria (x.). For John the Apostolic ministry there is already an accomplished fact (iv. 38). Unlike Mark and Matthew, who only provide for the appearance of Jesus to the disciples in Galilee, John concurs with Luke in relating his manifestation to them (within closed doors) on the day of the resurrection. The appearance to Peter, an item in the original tradition (1 Cor. xv. 5), mentioned but not described by Luke (xxiv. 34), remains untold ; he has, indeed, visited and entered the tomb, but only saw the grave-clothes ; it is reserved for Mary Magdalene first to receive the message of the Lord. Luke, lastly, alone described the ascension (xxiv. 51) ; John apparently assumes it (xx. 17), and when he presents himself among his brethren (vv. 17, 19), he comes from the other world. It must, however, be doubtful how far these resemblances depend on actual literary contact. Luke had already behind him ' many ' written records. In our ignorance of what they contained there is always the possibility that John also may have been acquainted with some of them ; or again that he may have drawn from the preaching of the Elders who repeated traditions in which details became confused and transferred from one story to another. That there was a copious supply of material is plain from the express statement of the Evangelist (xx. 30), repeated with emphasis by the final editor (xxi. 25). Was there an equal body of teaching corresponding to the abundance of the ' signs,' and had the Evangelic discourses any antecedents on the Synoptic plane ?

To such a question only a brief answer can be given ; the differences between the Synoptic and the Johannine language will be discussed more fully hereafter. But the keynote is already struck in the remarkable words ascribed to Jesus by both Matthew and Luke :

Matt. xi. 25-27.	Luke x. 21, 22.
' At that season Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou didst hide	' In that same hour he rejoiced in holy Spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth,

these things from the wise and understanding, and didst reveal them unto babes: yea, Father, for so it was well-pleasing in thy sight. All things have been delivered unto me of my Father; and no one knoweth the Son save the Father; neither doth any one know the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal *him*.'

that thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding, and didst reveal them unto babes: yea, Father, for so it was well-pleasing in thy sight. All things have been delivered unto me of my Father; and no one knoweth who the Son is save the Father; and who the Father is save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal *him*.'

The identity of these two passages is explained by their derivation from the document (Q) containing so much of the teaching of Jesus incorporated in Matthew and Luke.[1] The Evangelists do not, indeed, assign the words to the same occasion. With a loose formula of connexion (cp. xii. 1, xiv. 1) Matthew presents them as a sequel to the terrible denunciation on the unbelieving cities, Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, which had been the scene of so much of his work. Why, after such a record of failure, should Jesus break out into exalted thanksgiving? The dooms just uttered recognise no distinctions, and exempt from condemnation no humble followers, as though all inhabitants shared a common guilt. Luke attaches the joyous outburst to a very different scene on his last journey to Jerusalem, the triumphant return of the Seventy Disciples from their successful mission, welcomed immediately by Jesus (cp. ii. 38, vii. 21) with inspired utterance (cp. i. 47) as a symbol of Satan's fall from heaven. The opening words recall the Greek of the Son of Sirach (Ecclus. li. 1), and Matthew's sequel (vv. 28-30), which has no parallel in Luke, and can hardly, therefore, have been attached to ver. 27 in Q, has long been recognised as analogous in style to the invitation of Wisdom (Ecclus. li. 23 ff.). Matthew has thus drawn it

[1] This is in accordance with the usual critical method. But in our ignorance of the process by which our Gospels acquired their final shape, and in view of the supposed early date of Q, I find it difficult to accept it as an authentic item in the midst of such different material.

from some other source.[1] But, further, between the opening thanksgiving and the mysterious declaration concerning the mutual knowledge of Father and the Son there are wide differences of style. The address to the Father as 'Lord of heaven and earth' finds its sole counterpart in the language attributed to Paul (Acts xvii. 24). Other parallels may be easily collected in the Apostle's references to God's hidden ways, in his quotation from Isaiah, his allusions to revelation, to the divine will, and to the communication of knowledge by tradition.[2] The passage in Matthew thus falls into three parts with very different literary affinities. Together they seem to form a kind of hymn, expressive of the faith of the Church, the utterance of its experience of the revelation of God in Christ, of rest for the weary, and an easy yoke for the heavy-laden. But the description of Christ as 'the Son' is unusual on the lips of Jesus, and not less strange is the implication of a peculiar relation to 'the Father,' of whom he elsewhere speaks as 'our' or 'your Father which is in heaven.'

The title 'Son of God' was no doubt early associated with Jesus in the theocratic or Messianic sense of Psalm ii. It was employed by the Apostle Paul, who found it vindicated by the resurrection. True, all who were led by the Spirit became sons of God by adoption. But as God's 'own Son,' not only 'first born from the dead' but also the 'first born of all creation,' he might be called in a passage of extreme solemnity 'the Son' when he should deliver up the kingdom to God even the Father (1 Cor. xv. 24, 28). The two terms are here set over against each other, the Son being presented in a conspicuous relation of subjection beneath God's universal supremacy, which can hardly be fitted to the function of revelation in the Matthean utterance. The same term appears in the great eschatological discourse, where 'the Son' is declared ignorant of the day or hour of his own Advent to judge

[1] Can it be the 'Wisdom of God' (Luke xi. 49), which appears also to be quoted in Matt. xxiii. 34-36 ?

[2] 1 Cor. ii. 7 ; Eph. iii. 9 ; Col. i. 26 (Luke uses the Apostle's compound verb) ; 'wise and prudent,' 1 Cor. i. 19 ; 'revealed,' frequent in various connexions in Paul : so also 'good pleasure' and 'delivered.'

the world, and is thus—while superior to the angels—emphatically subordinated to the Father (Mark xiii. 32). Its occurrence is possibly due to the desire to moderate the too eager anticipation of a generation already passing away while the Son of Man had not yet arrived. Matthew, it will be noticed, was early exposed to correction, and the words as theologically embarrassing were struck out from both Syriac and Greek texts.[1] They are, in fact, incongruous with the announcement 'All things have been delivered unto me of my Father.' What are 'all things,' and how were they 'delivered'? The word denotes the act of imparting knowledge or handing on information from the teacher to the taught. Such knowledge was conveyed in the shape of 'deliverances' or 'traditions' such as Paul 'delivered' to the Corinthians concerning the resurrection (1 Cor. xv. 3; cp. xi. 2, 23). Such 'traditions' might concern doctrine or conduct (2 Thess. ii. 15, iii. 6).[2] In the lofty relation of the Father and the Son 'all things' include a narrower or a wider range in different interpretations. They are sometimes restricted to 'these things' (ver. 25) and identified with the particular content of the preaching of the kingdom which the faithless cities have spurned; but the uncertainty of the connexion and their inappropriateness to the Lucan song of triumph renders this unsuitable. A second explanation includes the whole scope of the divine revelation, all truths of the nature of God and his purposes for man, the secrets of the constitution of the world, the mysteries of creation and destiny; all that the Father vouchsafes to impart to the Son to enable him to communicate the knowledge which is 'life eternal.' They are the things which Jesus claims to have heard from the Father that he may speak them upon the earth (John viii. 26). Yet a third meaning has been discovered, when the words are understood in the sense of the endowment of the risen Jesus with 'all authority in heaven and on earth' (Matt. xxviii. 18). Such a gift, however, is surely premature; it is inconsistent with the technical significance of the word

[1] Cp. Streeter, *The Four Gospels*, p. 594.

[2] Cp. Matt. vii. 3, 'traditions of the elders.'

'delivered'; and it does not fit the peculiar intimacy implied in the mutual knowledge of the Father and the Son, which is the key of revelation.[1] In the ancient Babylonian mythology the relation between Marduk, the son of Ea (Lord of the Deep and Father of the Gods), who was sent forth by his Sire as the artificer of the world, the helper of man, forgiving sins, healing all ills, and loving to awaken the dead—is expressed by saying:

'My son! What knowest thou not, what more can I tell thee?
Marduk! What knowest thou not, what more can I tell thee?
What I know, that thou also knowest.'[2]

It is an early stage in the long process of religious development culminating in the interpretation of the person and work of Jesus in terms of Hellenistic thought. How soon such application of current modes of religious *gnosis* began, we cannot tell, any more than we can determine the region in which they gained acceptance. It is more probable that it was in some great centre at once of commerce and culture, open to various influences, such as Antioch, than that it started in the narrower circle of the Jerusalem Church. The preachers who carried it to the congregation at Ephesus would find there congenial soil. As they pictured the Good Shepherd, they could almost hear him say, amid the multitude of voices, 'I know mine own, and mine own know me, even as the Father knoweth me, and I know the Father' (John x. 14).[3]

[1] It would perhaps hardly need mention but for its wide-spread adoption and the eminence of the scholar who recently reverted to it. In the first edition of the *Schriften des N.Ts.* the late Prof. Johannes Weiss adopted the second of the meanings above, which had also the sanction of Wellhausen. In the third (1917), edited by the late Prof. Bousset, the words are understood to mean 'all power has been given to the Son by the Father.' *Contra*, cp. Norden, *Agnostos Theos* (1913), p. 288 ff.; and Ed. Meyer, *op. cit.* i. p. 286.

[2] Jeremias, *The Old Test. in the Light of the Ancient East*, vol. i. (1911), p. 107.

[3] For a discussion of the early varieties of the text of the Matthean saying it is sufficient to refer to Harnack, *The Sayings of Jesus* (1908, p. 302): 'The original version of the saying (in Q) may be defended on

III

Beside a general knowledge of the main outlines of the Marcan tradition it is often pleaded that the Fourth Evangelist as the 'Beloved Disciple' possessed an intimate personal acquaintance with Jesus. If he is identified with 'the Elder' John whom Papias describes by the title 'disciple of the Lord,' there is no way to test this claim by external testimony. But it is legitimate to ask whether the internal evidence of the Gospel supports it. To array all its items here is, of course, impossible, but a brief examination of the narrative of the opening scenes of the ministry will put important clues into the reader's hand which he can apply elsewhere for himself.

Following the Marcan tradition the Evangelist attaches the first appearance of Jesus on the scene to the ministry of a predecessor, John (i. 19-34). He needs no designation as 'the Baptist'; his function as the preacher of the approaching kingdom is ignored; the purpose of his baptism remains unexplained; the impassioned summons to repentance is suppressed. The story opens abruptly (i. 19) with a deputation of priests and Levites from the authorities at Jerusalem. Of the cause of their mission, the excitement aroused by the challenge of a new speaker, his strange garb and vehement words, the crowds gathered around him near the Jordan—not a word is said. This is all taken for granted; had not Luke already alluded to the rumour which ran that this might be the Christ (iii. 15)? For the Evangelist the sole significance of John was to bear witness to Jesus as the Son of God. Thrice does he confess that he is not the Christ. He is not even the Messiah's forerunner Elijah, though Jesus had himself, it was believed, hinted at that character (Mark ix. 13; Matt. xvii. 12, 13); nor would he allow himself to be

good grounds, but the canonical version in both gospels is "Johannine" in character and indefensible.' He thinks the clause 'no man knoweth the Son save the Father' interpolated. See for a different treatment Prof. Bacon's essay, *Jesus the Son of God* (1911).

greeted as 'the prophet' who should carry on the work of Moses (cp. vi. 14, vii. 40 f.; Acts iii. 22).[1] He is but 'the voice of one crying in the wilderness,' and the Evangelist puts into his own mouth (ver. 23) the description which the Church had borrowed from Isaiah and applied through all his predecessors in authorship. It is apparently assumed that it would have been proper for either of these three exalted characters to baptise, but John has his own justification. Instead of proclaiming the impending judgment as one mightier than himself arrives to cleanse his threshing-floor and with his winnowing fan sever the chaff from the wheat for burning, he announces that there is already standing in their midst one whom they know not.

Only on the next day does he explain the transformation of the Synoptic message. This is, after all, no judge wielding penal flame: he is 'the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin' not of his own people only, but 'of the world.' The horizon is suddenly widened from the land of Israel and the children of Abraham to embrace universal humanity. Vast is his function as God's lamb, belonging to God, sent by God, destined to be in some sense offered to God. Already is his atoning death in view; or ever his ministry is begun it is regarded as complete. It was not strange that John, like his fellow Jews, should not have 'known' him (vv. 31, 33). But he was divinely made aware that his own baptism was only preparatory to that of one who should come after and baptise with Holy Spirit. He himself saw the Spirit coming down out of heaven and abiding upon Jesus, who was thus equipped with transcendent power.[2] Of the descent of Jesus into the Jordan the speaker is silent. He describes a sacred mystery. The reader may picture it for himself as he pleases. But for the Evangelist the whole significance of the Baptist lies in the solemn testimony, 'I have seen, and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.' This is not history, it is interpretation.

[1] Founded on Deut. xviii. 15, where the reference is not to a single person but to a succession.

[2] For the probable meaning, cp. Lect. IV, p. 363 ff.

The career of Jesus is already predetermined. His august character is not to develop with his work, it is to fill a prescribed part, and reach a destined end. The John of the Evangelist exhibits at the outset the transforming influence of the retrospective imagination of the Church,[1] and his own place in the drama is re-shaped to match. Fortified by such vision he could never have sent from prison the distressed enquiry, 'Art thou he that cometh, or look we for another?' (Matt. xi. 2).

The way is thus prepared for the entrance of Jesus on the scene. As the Baptist was standing the next day with two disciples—still, therefore, in the neighbourhood where the deputation from Jerusalem had found him beyond Jordan (ver. 28)—he saw Jesus as he walked, and renewed his testimony of the day before, 'Behold the Lamb of God.' The two disciples (cp. Luke vii. 19) at once left him to 'follow' Jesus. The word has a double meaning, they walked after him, and became his followers. But not, first of all, without enquiry; here is a glimpse of the later experience of the Church. When Jesus turns and sees them behind him,[2] he enquires what they seek. Addressing him as 'Teacher,' they ask where he is staying. He replies with the customary form of invitation, 'Come and see.' It is, I think, probable that the word 'abide' has also an inner significance. It is the term which describes the loftiest spiritual communion. The speaker has the Spirit 'abiding' upon him (ver. 32). The question really means 'in what high fellowship does Jesus dwell? Into what can he welcome those who would come after him?' The visit which the disciples pay him, and which temporarily ends at nightfall, like the companionship vouchsafed to the two disciples at Emmaus, symbolises the entrance into the first blessed experience of faith and love awakened in the presence of Christ. It

[1] Was there one deputation or two (cp. vv. 19, 24)? The question is not easy to answer, for ver. 24 may be translated in different ways, and the reference of 25 to 20 f. may be editorial. Similarly the repetitions of phrase in 31-33 and in 29, 36, have begotten suspicions of duplication and harmonising.

[2] For the phraseology, cp. xx. 14, 16; 'turned,' 8 times in Luke.

was fitting that it should take place at the tenth hour, the number of perfection.[1]

So were the first two permitted to receive the revelation of the Son of God. This is no swift response to an unexpected call from a new preacher of the Kingdom after John's arrest (Mark i. 14 f.) ; it is the transfer from one discipleship to another under a mysterious providential guidance. John makes no attempt to detain the pair who leave him so abruptly. His function is simply to give the signal for the foundation of the new community which is to supersede his own.[2] Andrew, who is identified as Simon Peter's brother, as though Peter were the better known, immediately proceeds to impart the discovery to him, ' We have found the Messiah.' As John had looked upon Jesus (ver. 36), so Jesus now looks on Peter with the same eye of recognition, and at once designates him Cephas, Peter, ' the Rock.' Of the unnamed companion of Andrew nothing more is said. The view of the early Fathers that the Evangelist who is subsequently identified with the ' beloved disciple ' thus indicated himself is very generally accepted, and those who regard him as the Apostle John see in him, of course, one of the sons of Zebedee. This does not, however, bring the narrative into any closer harmony with that of Mark.

The scene is laid in Perea instead of by the Lake of Galilee, in view of the boats in which the fishers plied their craft. Simon receives his new name at once. The Synoptic narratives do not agree about the specific occasion on which it was conferred, Matthew reserving it for an advanced period in the ministry at Caesarea Philippi, when Simon recognised Jesus as the Messiah (xvi. 18, 19).[3] No conjectures can overcome these discrepancies. Instead

[1] In the time-reckoning of the Gospel, 4 p.m. For the symbolism of numbers cp. Philo, *On the Ten Commandments*, v., *The Planting of Noah*, xxix, etc.

[2] It will be observed that the Johannine scheme of incidents day by day leaves no room for the forty days' fast in the wilderness. This bold omission is apparently due to a sense of the incongruity of presenting the Son of God who has come down from heaven, sharing the Father's knowledge and fulfilling his will, as exposed to temptation by Satan.

[3] Cp. Mark iii. 16 ; Luke vi. 14.

of the summons of Jesus from their daily toil, Andrew and his companion leave their attendance on the Baptist on their own account to follow him. Peter is in the neighbourhood, for he can be found next day. James and John are never named throughout the whole Gospel, though they are brought as Sons of Zebedee into the final group beside the lake (xxi. 2). There, just as the Unnamed was the first with Andrew to find out the Teacher, so the Beloved Disciple anticipates Peter in the realisation 'It is the Lord' (xxi. 7). From what sources the Evangelist drew his narrative we cannot tell.[1] But it is founded on the same assumption which underlies the language of the Baptist. In conflict with the Synoptic presentation which defers the disclosure of Jesus' character as Messiah till the journey to Jerusalem is in sight and the Galilean ministry is about to close, it describes him as invested with that dignity from the outset, and revered under its most lofty titles. When the little group follow Jesus on another morrow into Galilee and Philip is found,[2] the new disciple in his turn promptly finds a fifth, Nathanael.[3] The first ground on which the primitive Church rested its appeal, the witness of Scripture, is already alleged. Nathanael's incredulity, like that of many a later convert, is met by the confident invitation caught from the Teacher's example, 'Come and see.' A guileless Israelite, duly acquainted therefore with the law and the prophets, on which he might have meditated like many another student or scribe under a fig tree, he is convinced by the

[1] It is, of course, quite possible that Jesus had some previous acquaintance with the two pairs of brothers; but it cannot have been of the Johannine type, involving the early communication to three of them of his exalted function.

[2] By whom? According to our present text by Jesus, but as Peter was found by Andrew, and Philip in his turn finds Nathanael, it has been conjectured that the intervention of Jesus in the chain has accidentally taken the place of Andrew, who finds his fellow-townsman Philip from Bethsaida, and brings him to Jesus as he brought Peter, and as Philip and Andrew are afterwards associated in telling Jesus of the Greeks (xii. 21 f.; cp. vi. 5, 8).

[3] There are thus five altogether, corresponding to Mark's five, Simon and Andrew, James and John, and Levi. Nathanael, however, unless the attempted identification with Bartholomew be accepted, was not included in the Twelve, who are never named by the Evangelist, and are only rarely mentioned (vi. 67, 70 f., xx. 24).

insight of Jesus, and at once addresses him not only as a Jewish Rabbi, but in the language of prophet and psalmist as Son of God and King of Israel. Those were the familiar terms of the national hope. But they meant much more to the Church. The Son of God belonged not to earth but heaven. Belief in him opened the way to a much wider vision than any local sovereignty. The secrets of heaven itself were disclosed, and all kinds of spiritual gifts of truth and grace could be discerned like angels descending from above on him who vouchsafed to be for a time the Son of Man.[1]

These differences can no longer be ignored. They proceed, as further enquiry will make clear, from a profound divergence in the conception of the nature and function of Jesus. Is it surprising that as Dean Armitage Robinson contemplated the opening scenes of the great story, he should exclaim, 'No contrast can possibly be more startling than this; and we are constrained to ask, Can both these representations be historically true? or is one the simple and natural language of the facts, and the other the poetic creation of an ideal life of Christ?'[2] Less pointedly, but with a similar recognition of difficulties, does the Bishop of Gloucester recently put a similar question: 'Was all this imaginative reconstruction, as some have held, or had the author independent knowledge, whether gained from tradition or from written sources, or from his own personal acquaintance with the events that he describes?'[3]

[1] Cp. the titles of Jesus, Lect. IV, p. 357. For further illustrations of the contrast with the Synoptic narrative of Jesus' life, cp. Lect V, p. 369 ff. The figurative application of Jacob's dream is found in Philo, *On Dreams*, i. chap. xxii. The ladder was a very ancient Egyptian symbol, and continued in use in tombs down to Roman times. It played an important part also in the soul's ascent in Mithraism. Cp. Cumont, *Astrology, etc.* (1912), p. 184.

[2] *The Study of the Gospels* (1902), p. 137.

[3] *Life and Teaching of Jesus Christ* (1923), p. 39. Prof. Maurice Goguel has attempted to discover some points in tradition which might have served as bases for the Johannine reconstruction of the Synoptic narrative. The process is in the highest degree conjectural. *Introd. au Nouv. Test.* ii. (1924), p. 384. Similarly Professor W. Bauer, *Das Johannes-Evangelium* (1925), p. 241.

IV

Our age is not the first to propound such riddles. The greatest teacher of the ancient Church, Origen, at the head of the Catechetical School of Alexandria, had frankly faced them, and it is worth while to glance at the direction in which he looked for a solution. Reference has already been made to the distinction drawn by Origen's learned predecessor, Clement, between *somatika*, bodily or 'material' things, and *pneumatika*, or 'spiritual,' corresponding to 'literal' and 'allegorical.' It was a distinction which had been employed, as is well known, by the Jewish philosopher Philo, contemporary with Jesus, in expounding the narratives of Genesis. Clement accordingly designated the work ascribed to John the 'spiritual' Gospel,[1] and Origen similarly contrasted the two types, the *somatic* Gospel which 'teaches only a shadow of the mysteries of Christ, the Gospel which is capable of being understood by any one,' and 'what John calls the Eternal Gospel (Rev. xiv. 6), which may properly be called the *spiritual* Gospel.' This 'presents clearly to all those who have the will to understand, all matters concerning the very Son of God, both the mysteries presented by his discourses, and those matters of which his acts were the enigmas.' After dwelling on the discrepancies between the accounts of the opening of the ministry, he continues :

'The student, staggered by the consideration of these things, will either renounce the attempt to find all the Gospels true, and, not venturing to conclude that all our information about our Lord is untrustworthy, will choose at random one of them to be his guide ; or he will accept the Four, and will consider that their truth is not to be sought for in the outward and material letter.... I do not condemn them (he continues, referring to the Evangelists) if they sometimes dealt freely with things which to the eye of sense happened differently, and changed them so as to subserve the mystical aims which they had in view, so as to speak of a thing which happened in a certain place as if it happened in another, or of

[1] *Ante*, p. 226.

what took place at a certain time as if it had taken place at another time, and to introduce into what was spoken in a certain way some changes of their own. They propose to speak the truth where it was possible both "bodily" and "spiritually," and where this was not possible it was their intention to prefer the spiritual to the material. The spiritual truth was often preserved, as one might say, in the material falsehood.' [1]

Here is a glimpse of great value into the different aims and consequent differences of method in biographical composition. The modern historian is concerned most of all with his facts. They must be derived from trustworthy sources; he must verify speeches; he must not confuse dates or misplace incidents. The idealist is not thus rigidly confined. He can express his interpretation of a character by words that were never spoken or deeds that were never done. He can invent symbols that will suggest realities beyond the reach of sense, and be full of light to those who know how to use the inner eye. Origen, indeed, might see things that were not there, as he discerned in one of the shoes whose latchet the Baptist declared himself unworthy to untie the assumption by the Son of God of human flesh and bones, and in the other the descent into Hades, 'whatever that Hades may be.' [2] This is the extravagance of symbolism, for there is no connexion between the object and the idea. But when the Synoptists relate that at the crucifixion there was an eclipse which lasted for three hours, and the veil of the temple was rent in twain, and Matthew adds that there was a great earthquake and the rocks were rent and the tombs were opened, imagination is simply expressing the sympathy of nature with the world's bereavement as the Son of God passed from the visible scene. Even so at the death of the Buddha five hundred years before there occurred a mighty earthquake, terrible and awe-inspiring, the thunders of heaven burst forth, and the weeping disciples cried, 'Too soon has the Eye gone out in the

[1] *Comm. on John*, i. 9; x. 1-4 (tr. Prof. Allan Menzies).

[2] *Ibid.* vi. 18. The first of these went sounding on for centuries, and turns up (for instance) in St. Bernard, *On Consideration*, v. 9, tr. Lewis (1908), p. 156.

world.'[1] When Matthew inserts into Mark's narrative of the approach of Jesus on the waters of the lake the story of Peter's attempt to meet him and his rescue from the waves as he began to sink by Jesus' grasp, the symbolism is as plain as in the tale of the Buddha's disciple who started to walk across a river to hear the Master teach when there was no boat at the landing, was frightened by the waves in the middle, and only saved himself from sinking by making an act of faith in the Buddha firm, when the water again bore him up. The angels' song of rejoicing at the birth of the Lord's Christ is no more history than the corresponding chant of the heavenly *devas* announcing the birth of the Buddha-to-be.[2] This mode of expressing faith, reverence, gratitude, love, has generated many a beautiful tale in divers fields of religion and can be traced all through the First Three Gospels. The mission of the Seventy, for example, as related by Luke (x. 1 ff.), is to be understood in this fashion. Jesus is on his way 'to be received up,' and he sends seventy messengers, two and two, to every city and place whither he himself was about to come. Why seventy, and why the ancient variant reading seventy-two? The route lay through Samaria, and in that tiny region among the hills there were not villages enough to occupy so large a band of disciples, nor could Jesus himself visit all the localities where they preached. His advent must be awaited after the ascension. In other words Samaria stands for the world beyond the Jew. This is indicated by the number seventy, the traditional number of the nations of the earth, with an alternative figure of seventy-two.[3] Luke has thus in view the expansion of Christianity to include the Gentiles. For those who lived in this atmosphere of imaginative expression a hint of this kind sufficed to convey the author's meaning, and identify an individual with a type. When the cripple at the pool of Bethesda

[1] *Dīgha Nikāya*, ii. p. 158. Cp. similar references to elipses on the death of Julius Cæsar and Augustus; Keim, *Jesus of Nazara*, vi. 172.

[2] Cp. Carpenter, *Buddhism and Christianity* (1923), pp. 173-180.

[3] Founded on the list in Gen. x. A similar variation appears in the number of the Seventy (or 72) translators of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek.

was said to have been lying there thirty-eight years in his infirmity (John v. 5), the reader is reminded of the thirty-eight years of desert wandering till Israel was ready for the march into the land of promise.[1] When the Samaritan woman is told that she has no husband but has had five (John iv. 18), the figure may outwardly imply the supernatural knowledge of the Incarnate Son; but inwardly it points (as has long been recognised [2]) to the gods brought by the five groups of settlers transported from Mesopotamia by the Assyrian conquerors after the fall of the Northern Kingdom (2 Kings xvii. 24, 31). Who, then, was the contemporary who was no true husband? It is sometimes supposed that it was the God of Israel ignorantly worshipped on Mount Gerizim, to whom the unchaste woman was no true wife. But if the previous identification be correct, it seems more consonant with analogy to look for some representative of false teaching. The Christian father Jerome, who lived for many years in his cell at Bethlehem in the fourth century, found him in Dositheus, who was reputed to have been a disciple of John the Baptist and to have claimed to be the prophet predicted by Moses.[3] A sect possessing books attributed to him maintained a local existence till the sixth century. Mixed up with his story is the figure of Simon the Mage (Acts viii. 9), whom the early Church regarded as the father of all heresy. The statement of Justin, himself born in the country, that he was worshipped by almost all the Samaritans,[4] has led some modern students to fix on him. Neither interpretation may be correct; but Jerome's reference implies his conviction that the conversation beside the well carried within it a historic meaning.

V

The use of the religious tale as the vehicle for ideas of high import was well known in later Judaism under the

[1] Deut. ii. 14.

[2] Cp., for instance, Wordsworth, *New Test.* (1886), *in loc.*

[3] *Dict. Eccl. Biography*, art. by Salmon. [4] 1 Apol. xxvi.

name of Haggādah,[1] and finds a conspicuous illustration in the last chapter, often supposed to have been added by the author of the First Letter, in his turn usually identified with the Elder. What traditions or other sources he employed we cannot tell. The scene is laid on the shore of the sea of Tiberias, a designation which the geographer Fürrer tells us (as has been already noted) did not come into use till the second century.[2] Seven disciples are gathered there, among them Peter and the Sons of Zebedee. They fish all night but take nothing. As the day breaks Jesus stands upon the beach, but in the dim dawn no one knows him. Not even his question with its tender address, 'Children,' awakens recognition. He bids them cast the net again, and they are not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes. The marvel quickens perception, and the Beloved Disciple exclaims 'It is the Lord.' Peter girds on his coat and leaps into the lake, the boat is only 200 cubits from the shore and he is in no danger this time of being engulfed. Why is the distance specified at that figure? It is suggested that it indicates the return of the once faithless Apostle to his Lord. In the numerical symbolism of Philo it was resolved into two hundreds, the first intimating purification from unrighteousness, the second representing the plenitude of perfect virtue.[3] If this is the application here, Peter approached his Lord as penitent and withal as cleansed, and ready therefore to receive his new charge. Lest this should seem too fantastic, let the student consider what follows. The spread of the Gospel had been very early conceived under the image of fishing ever since Jesus had called the first disciples to become 'fishers of men' (Mark i. 17). The net which gathered in good and bad (Matt. xiii. 47 f.) soon became the symbol of the mixed character of the Church, and the fish an accepted emblem of the believer. Luke developed the conception into an allegory of a somewhat similar kind (v. 1-11), when Peter, who had toiled

[1] Cp. Canon Streeter, *op. cit.* p. 503.

[2] *Z.N.T.W.* (1902), p. 261; *ante*, p. 220[3].

[3] *Questions on Genesis* (v. 23), lxxxiii. Cp. Abbott, *Enc. Bibl.* ii. col. 1797.

all night with his partners James and John and taken nothing, is bidden to put out into the deep and let down the nets for a draught. They drew in such a multitude that they threatened to break, but with the aid of his partners both boats were filled.[1] They were not counted, but their profusion at least pointed to a great multitude of the faithful. The Johannine figure, 153, was early recognised as symbolic, and this conviction begot many quaint attempts to explain it. Origen noted that it could be divided into $3 \times 50 + 3$, representative of the Trinity. Others suggested 100 for the Gentiles, 50 for the Jews, and 3 for the Trinity! It was ingeniously discovered that 153 was what Philo called the 'potentiality' of 17 (the sum of the digits, 1, 2, 3 . . . 17), and this was accepted, for example, by Theophilus and Augustine, as the equivalent of the Christians keeping the Ten Commandments and constituting the Church filled with the Sevenfold Spirit.[2] Commenting on Ezekiel (xlvii. 12), Jerome mentions incidentally that a Greek poet on fishing reckoned the different known species of fish at 153, and this application of the figure (perhaps the most probable) would typify the universality and inclusiveness of the Gospel salvation, in accordance with the command to 'make disciples of all the nations.'[3]

The story has its own difficulties, and it is possible that different versions of it are here combined. When Peter has leapt into the water, the rest of the disciples bring the boat to shore, dragging the net with them, though their united strength had before been unable to move it, and disembark. There they find a fire with fish already on it (vv. 8, 9). Why, then, should Jesus bid them bring of the fish which they had taken as if to provide a meal? And

[1] This has often been interpreted as a symbol of the union of the Jewish and Gentile parties in the Church which was at first threatened with rupture, but there is no sign of antagonism between Peter in one boat and James and John in the other, and the reference is probably only to the numbers crowding into the new community and straining its resources.

[2] Bishop Wordsworth quaintly divides into 144 and 9; the first being the square of the Apostolic number 12, and the second the square of 3, the symbol of the Trinity! Theoph. *Allegories*, iv. 11, in Fahn's *Forschungen*, ii. (1883), p. 84.

[3] Matt. xxviii. 19.

how is it that Peter only then comes up out of the water (ver. 10) and drags the net to land? The food is prepared, and none of the fish just caught are laid upon the coals. The instructions in vv. 10 and 12 seem to belong to independent narratives. The Reviser's marginal rendering is equally incongruous. The boat is empty, why must Peter go aboard? and how could he drag the net to land alone when the whole crew, including himself, had not been strong enough before to stir it? Or why was it needful to bring it to shore at all, when the other disciples were already there and had brought it with them?[1] Two situations are here implied, in one of which Peter plays a more distinctive part. The failure of the disciples to recognise the risen Jesus may imply that they had not seen him before, in other words, that this was the first and not the third manifestation of Jesus to the disciples (ver. 14). Can the original source have been a story in the lost end of Mark, carrying out the angel's promise (Mark xvi. 7)?[2] The question 'Lovest thou me?' thrice repeated to match Peter's threefold denial, seems more appropriate to a first meeting. Why was it not asked on the evening of the day of resurrection when Peter in the midst of the disciples receives the sacred breath, and, yet unforgiven, is endowed with power to forgive?

The meal which follows with its bread and fish repeats in miniature beside the lake the repast with the multitude upon the mountain (vi. 3). It is true that the risen Christ (who has come from on high) offers no thanks; the food needs no consecration which is provided by the Lord from heaven. But its meaning was very early apprehended, and both Eastern and Western tradition, represented by the Sinaitic Syriac and the Codex Bezae recognised it by adding the Eucharistic word, though not in the same place. It is the solemn consecration of the

[1] There seems to be a secret providence at work, similar to that which carries the boat (vi. 21) to its destination 'straightway' out of the storm in the middle of the lake.

[2] See this very ably argued by Canon Streeter, *op. cit.* p. 355 ff., who does not, however, mention the discrepancies.

Church for which Peter (who, according to one story, has brought the net to shore alone) is then designated as leader and guardian, ' Feed my sheep.'

The third scene in the allegory places the Beloved Disciple in striking contrast with Peter. In the Lucan use of the theme the marvel awakens Peter's sense of the Lord's majesty and his own sinfulness, ' Depart from me.' Before the solemnity of the presence of the risen Christ no word is spoken. If either version of the story contained any confession, it has been replaced by the question with its formal address, ' Simon son of John,' and its implied reproof, ' Lovest thou me more than these ? ' Thrice must he answer as he had thrice denied. It is the recall to his Lord's service, the test of his devotion, the sign of his fitness for the care of the Church thus solemnly committed to him. He is no longer young, the days of independence are past, old age will soon overtake him, the end is in view. The hint of Jesus at the supper-table—' Thou canst not follow me now, but thou shalt follow afterwards ' (xiii. 36)—is expanded into a definite reference to his execution,[1] and completed by the injunction, with its implied warning against another fall, again in the double sense of discipleship and martyrdom, ' Follow me.' For the Beloved Disciple neither question nor warning is needed. He is already ' following,' but along a path of life not death. The early Church has cherished the belief that some of the disciples should survive till Christ's return.[2] One after another has died, and in the Ephesian community hope gathered around the Ephesian Elder. But he, too, had passed away,[3] and his departure had to be conciliated with the promise attributed to Jesus. The ambiguity does not really lie in its translation into the conditional form, but in the word translated ' tarry.' Like other Johannine terms it has two uses, first, of dwelling or remaining locally, and secondly, of spiritual

[1] Commentators differ about the interpretation of the outstretched hands, whether for binding or the cross.

[2] Mark ix. 1 ; Matt. xvi. 27, 28 ; 1 Thess. iv. 15.

[3] Vv. 22, 23 apparently constitute an apology by suggesting another form of the promise as applied to the Elder.

presence or communion.[1] In the teaching of the knowledge imparted by him to the Church, he would abide as the quickener of that faith and love through which Jesus would come into his followers' hearts.

VI

All attempts to explain the origin of the Fourth Gospel involve hypotheses by which to connect the broken links of fact, and every student has to construct his own interpretation. The following propositions endeavour to distinguish between facts and possibilities.

(1) The Apocalypse was probably edited about 95 A.D. by a Prophet named John.

(2) Justin Martyr (after 150 A.D.) identifies this John with the Apostle.

(3) The Gospel was probably produced (i-xx) about 100 or a little later in a Fellowship possessing a store of material, partly oral, partly written, by an Elder (probably at Ephesus[2]) who may have been named John.

(4) Polycarp of Smyrna, contemporary with the Elder (but probably younger) was heard by Irenæus to speak frequently of John, and was understood by him in later life to have referred to the Apostle, so that Irenæus identified him as the author.

(5) Papias (about 140) mentions an Elder John whom he supposes to have been a disciple (*i.e.* a hearer) of Jesus, and apparently to be still a living source of traditions. Irenæus refers to other Elders.

(6) If the Apostle had been martyred before 70 A.D., how could the identification of Prophet John and Elder John with him have arisen at Ephesus? To this question there is no answer but conjecture. If he had died at Ephesus after bequeathing his recollections to the Church, how was it that they assumed a shape so widely discrepant from Synoptic tradition?

[1] Cp. i. 32, 33, 39, 40. It is a very favourite word, Gospel (40 times), 1 John (23).

[2] The hypothesis of Antiochene or further Eastern origin may be left on one side. Cp. *ante*, pp. 194, 213.

(7) If the Elder presided over the composition of the Gospel, he may have introduced the Apostle John about whom the Asian elders had some traditions, 'pneumatically,' under the figure of the Beloved Disciple, but for what purpose is not clear. That he had met him in earlier life is not impossible, but he names no authorities himself, and if the Elder (2 John, 1) is identified with the Elder John of Papias, Papias must have been mistaken in supposing that he had ever been a disciple of Jesus.

(8) After the completion of i-xx, xxi. 1-23, was added pneumatically out of community stories, to explain Peter's eminence, and provide a sanction for Johannine teaching. The Gospel was at first confined within a small group of believers, and only made its way with difficulty.

(9) Last of all, when the Elder John was confused with the Apostle as the Prophet had been, by the attachment of xxi. 24 the Gospel was ascribed to the Beloved Disciple as the Apostle, though it contains itself no reference to such authorship.[1] Under Apostolic sanction it was then carried to Rome, probably about 150 A.D., but did not establish itself without opposition.

The Gospel thus contains elements which belong to the sphere of religious imagination. In narratives which seem founded on Synoptic traditions, such as the healing of the nobleman's son or the passage across the lake, it enhances the element of wonder. Its teaching is marked by differences of language, fresh themes, and peculiarities of style. The characters brought upon the scene are introduced by hints and suggestions rather as types than as individuals. Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman, the cripple at the pool, the man born blind, Pilate interviewing his prisoner in private, serve to bring out the most lofty and penetrating of the Saviour's thoughts, 'Ye

[1] The statements in xix. 34, 35, plainly interrupt the connexion of 33 and 36, and may be inserted with the corresponding citation in 37. The incident, and the nature of the witness borne by the spectator who must be understood to be present pneumatically (26), as none of the Twelve were actually at the crucifixion, is discussed in the Epilogue, p. 461. But the testimony in no way implies a written record, still less the authorship of the whole book.

must be born anew,' 'God is spirit,' 'My Father worketh until now, and I work,' 'I am the light of the world,' 'My kingdom is not of this world.' The presentation of religious ideals on the basis of prior records was a familiar practice in the history of Hebrew literature. The story of Moses' work was twice repeated after its primitive documentary embodiment; first, by the group of prophetic writers who produced the book of Deuteronomy and unhesitatingly declared 'Moses wrote this law'; and the second time in the elaborate legislation of the Priestly Code. In the interests of the later solemnities of the temple-worship the age of David and Solomon was described afresh by the writer of the books of Chronicles, and David was idealised as a Levitical saint. What was known as *Midrash*, 'commentary' or 'exposition,' [1] came to be a recognised method of conveying religious truth. What sources lay behind the author of Daniel we do not know; he sought to inspire his countrymen with courage to face religious persecution at the hands of Antiochus Epiphanes (164 B.C.) by a picture of heroic fidelity to the national faith four hundred years before. In the 'Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs' the sons of Jacob become the teachers of a Judaism developed far beyond the patriarchal age. Books such as Judith and Tobit belong to the same class at different levels of value. The earlier Gospels contain elements of similar nature. The beautiful stories in the Lucan chapters of the nativity are not the literal account of real events. No one supposes that a visible Gabriel, flying down from the sky, entered Mary's house at Nazareth so that an actual conversation took place between them, such as is represented in a picture in the gallery at Perugia, where the artist places St. Luke in the middle with his tablets in his hand taking it down. These are symbols by which the Evangelist seeks to convey ideas which he cannot express in any other way. Again and again does the Gospel warn us that it must be read in the spirit; only the spirit quickens, the flesh profits nothing. The same is true of the discourses of Jesus as of his wondrous signs. They frequently show marks of

[1] 2 Chron. xiii. 22; xxiv. 27.

grouping and arrangement which reveal that they have been worked up into continuous form, something like the five great sections into which Matthew has arranged so much of his material, beginning with the Sermon on the Mount. 'In the Johannine discourses,' writes Prof. Percy Gardner, 'and more especially in the long monologue towards the end of the Gospel, we feel that it is not the visible and audible Jesus who is speaking, but the Christ who is the life of the Church, and who is revealing himself in the Spirit.'[1] 'The Gospels,' says Origen, 'are the first fruits of all the Scriptures, but of the Gospels that of John is the first-fruits. No one can apprehend the meaning of it except he have lain on Jesus' breast, and received from him Mary to be his mother also.'[2] It is a stern canon, who now can satisfy it?

[1] *The Ephesian Gospel*, p. 115. [2] *Comm. on John*, i. 6.

LECTURE II

THE GOSPEL AND ITS ENVIRONMENT

THE Fourth Gospel, said Herder, in well-known words in the eighteenth century, is the echo of the First Three in a higher key. The differences in its style are obvious at once. The absence of the familiar themes of Synoptic teaching—the mention of the Kingdom of God only in the conversation with Nicodemus—repentance and forgiveness never named[1]—fresh symbols like the new birth, the Bread of life, the Lamb of God, the Light of the world—the repeated emphasis on the person and claims of Jesus, expressed in the emphatic 'I am'—all imply a special purpose on the author's part. In his selection of incidents, in his presentation of events, in his arrangement of discourses, he desires to convey a certain impression, to reach a definite end. With a precision unknown to his predecessors he defines his purpose as twofold, the proof of the function and nature of Jesus as the Messiah and the Son of God, and the significance of belief as the source of life in his name. The Gospels of Mark and Matthew contain no kind of address. That of Luke is composed for a single person. Here is an indication of a society. If we may suppose that the Fourth Evangelist has gathered contributions from among its members, possessed of similar traditions and sharing the same modes of thought, we see that his Gospel is more than the product of a single mind. It springs from the experience of a community, and is written on behalf of a fellowship, united by a

[1] The language of xx. 23 is of a quite different type (for example) from Matt. xviii. 21 ff., or Luke xv.

common faith in brotherly discipleship. In such a group there might be much diversity of race, of character, of outlook. Jews from the synagogue, Greeks from the philosophical schools, members of religious associations under other names such as Isis, Orpheus, Mithra, or worshippers of Artemis, Zeus, or any favourite Deity, were gathered into the Church. They were not always all of the same mind, and the Elder's letters not only, like the Gospel, enforce the need of brotherly love, but indicate the nature of errors which were threatening division and strife. There was already danger that false doctrines might issue in secessions and the formation of separate assemblies. Around them was persecution by the Jews (ix. 22, xv. 20, xvi. 2). In face of the Roman power Pilate must be presented as anxious to save Jesus from the charges of his opponents, and assured that his kingdom is not of this world. But the world is in irreconcilable antagonism, and the disciples are enveloped in its hatred (xv. 18, 19; xvii. 14; 1 John iii. 13). They must be defended from misrepresentation, safe-guarded from danger. The long time that seems to have elapsed before the Gospel came into general circulation, or at any rate was cited by the champions of Christianity in apologies to the public, perhaps implies that it was at first kept in reserve for the edification of the faithful. There were sacraments which must be withheld from common eyes. Was the teaching of this book among the holy secrets which were at first only imparted to believers, the revelation of sacred mysteries, a pearl of great price that must not be cast before swine?

I

Every book that is designed to establish some particular thesis will arrange its argument with reference to the beliefs and opinions by which it is opposed as well as to those by which it is supported. A Gospel written at Ephesus a little before or after 100 A.D. will not be conceived in the same vein as a record of traditions that were current in Jerusalem half a century earlier. It will have

to meet new problems ; it will present the Teacher in the light of fresh experience ; it will take account of developments ; it will lay stress on aspects of truth previously hardly in sight ; it will instinctively place its subject in the midst of its own time. It will be influenced by a new intellectual environment, it will exhibit the faith in relation to contemporary difficulties, current controversies, impending dangers. What hints can we gather from the Gospel itself of the circumstances surrounding its composition, the conditions which prompted its chief themes, the spiritual forces which expressed themselves through narrative and discourse ? Christianity was planted in Judaism, but it was a long way from Jerusalem to Ephesus. Within Palestine itself religion had various aspects, and was by no means all of one piece. The early Church was soon divided on questions arising out of the relation of the new faith to the old and the obligations of the ancient Law. Fresh conceptions of the nature and work of Christ were developed by the Apostle Paul of which the First Three Evangelists seem hardly aware, while they have plainly prepared the way for the Fourth. When Christianity was carried beyond the limits of Palestine to great cities such as Alexandria, Antioch, Tarsus, Ephesus, with all their varieties of culture and practice, it was inevitably affected by such contacts. Against some it had to defend itself ; to others it responded readily, and the new presentation of the Founder bears evident traces of the influences to which the older narratives were subjected.

The reader who approaches the book from the historical rather than the devotional point of view, and pursues its great argument from the time when Jesus enters apparently casually within the Baptist's range (i. 29), finds the story up to his arrest broadly distributed into two parts, first, the public ministry, engaged in the long controversy with the Jews extending over years (ii-xii), and secondly, the parting instructions to the disciples all concentrated into a single meal (xiii-xvii). With this contrast we are not now concerned.[1] The Teacher passes to and fro between Jerusalem and Galilee. To the familiar places, Nazareth

[1] Cp. Lect V, p. 368.

and Capernaum, other names are added, Bethany beyond Jordan (or Bethabara), Cana, Aenon, Salim, Ephraim. They cannot be found with any security upon the map, though Cana has at least four competitors and Ephraim three. But though identifications may be uncertain, there is no reason to doubt that they are real localities, like the pool with the five porches (whatever difficulties may attend its name [1]), the pool of Siloam, the treasury,[2] Solomon's porch, and the temple itself. The feasts occur at their appointed times, Passover, Tabernacles, the Dedication in the winter. There are details of current usage or belief, such as the practice of circumcision on the prescribed eighth day even when it was a Sabbath and involved forbidden work (vii. 23),[3] or the notion that physical disability might be a hereditary punishment for past sin (ix. 2),[4] or the priests' fear of contracting impurity by entering the Roman precincts before the Passover was slain (xviii. 28). The Evangelist is acquainted with a belief that the Messiah would appear from some unexpected quarter, which is expressed by the Jew Trypho in Justin's *Dialogue* (viii). He quotes the Scriptures as an inviolable authority (x. 35) ; the Jews will not believe, to vindicate Isaiah (xii. 38) ; Judas turns traitor that Scripture may be fulfilled (xiii. 18, xvii. 12) ; incident after incident upon the cross has the same purpose (xix. 24, 28, 36f.). The Evangelist's quotations have largely the character of 'free reminiscence,' swaying sometimes to the Hebrew, sometimes to the Greek text, without exactness. They point, however, to a greater familiarity with the books of the Canon than it seems reasonable to ascribe to a Greek convert.[5] However hard it is to explain the

[1] Cp. Rendel Harris, *Side Lights on N.T. Research* (1908), p. 70 ff.

[2] Cp. Strack-Billerbeck, *Komm. Zum N.T.* ii (1924), p. 41.

[3] *Ibid.* p. 487. [4] *Ibid.* p. 529.

[5] Cp. Loisy [2] (1921), p. 66, 'converted from paganism, a master of gnosis rather than an apostle of faith' ; and Prof. Grill of Tübingen, who published in 1923 the second part of a work of which the first was issued in 1902, and could still argue that the Evangelist's presentation of Judaism was all acquired knowledge. Prof. Burney and Mr. G. R. Driver are practically agreed that whether or not the Gospel is an actual translation of an Aramaic original, it was certainly *thought* in the

language imputed to Jesus about his own people, by almost universal consent the Evangelist was himself a Jew.

Beside the formal Judaism of the Temple and its hierarchy and its feasts, there was, however, another Judaism which is strangely ignored, the Judaism not of the capital but of the villages, not of the rulers but of the country-side. The Galilean ministry, which occupies so large a place in the narratives of the Synoptists, is ignored. Instead of carrying from the Baptist a summons to 'repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand' (Matt. iv. 17), Jesus opens his ministry with a wedding. The great themes of the Son of Man, the resurrection and the judgment, the common views of heaven and its angels, of Beelzebub and his demons, which aroused popular expectation and played so great a part in his teaching, are either ignored altogether or are completely transmuted into another plane of thought. Not his to tell of forgiveness and prayer, of the gracious mercy of the Father in heaven, of the bounty and beauty with which the earth is filled. No more are the men and women around him pictured in the common occupations of life, the shepherd, the husbandman, the builder, the fisherman, the travelling merchant, the owner of the vineyard, the courtiers in the palace, the housewife in the peasant's cottage. No more does he dine with a publican; no more do sinners sit at table with him; no more does he seek and save the lost. He 'walks' in Galilee (vii. 1), but he does not pass from synagogue to synagogue, or sit among the lilies on the hill-side, or talk from the boat to the people on the shore. There are no Pharisees to watch his conduct, to ask awkward questions and receive still more awkward answers. Pharisees there are, they could not be kept out of the story altogether, though their allies, the scribes and lawyers, are never named. But they hardly ever engage the Teacher personally (viii. 13, ix. 40); they are the

Semitic vernacular; the author was by nationality a Jew, and most probably a Jew of Palestine. The student will be attracted by the interesting explanation offered by Prof. Burney of the perplexity which has baffled so many commentators in vii. 38, *The Aramaic Origin*, etc., p. 109.

associates of the authorities in Jerusalem (vii. 32, 45, xi. 47, 57, xviii. 3) ; in the controversies over the ' righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees ' they have no share. The opposition which Jesus arouses is always conducted by ' the Jews.' The frequency of such phrases as ' the Jews' manner of purifying,' ' the passover of the Jews,' a ' ruler of the Jews ' implies that the Evangelist wrote for believers who needed such explanations. But that he should represent Jesus as asking, ' Is it not written in your law ? ' (x. 34) shows that he does not really conceive him as the son of Joseph and Mary : he is outside the limits of nationality altogether.[1]

When Jesus is presented for the disciple's belief as ' the Christ, the Son of God,' it is not so much the first as the second title which is important. All disciples accepted him in the first character—possibly those for whom the Evangelist wrote knew little of its specific meaning, and regarded the term as a personal name ; the whole stress fell on the second in its most exalted sense.[2] In the assumed historic situation the proof of the claim is presented to the Jews. The testimony on which such stress is laid in the debates in the temple is of various kinds.[3] At the foundation of the whole appeal lies the principle of Jewish jurisprudence that no one is to be believed in his own cause without additional support. ' If I bear witness of myself,' says Jesus, ' my witness is not true ' (*i.e.* trustworthy, v. 31). The objection is accordingly raised by the Pharisees, ' Thou bearest witness of thyself, thy witness is not true ' (viii. 13). On the other hand, ' in your law it is written that the witness of two men is true ' (ver. 17). Who, then, is the supporter

[1] Cp. viii. 17 ; ct. Luke x. 26, ' What is written in the law ? ' Schlatter, *Die Sprache und Heimath des vierten Evangelisten* (1902), p. 94, quotes a Philosopher in discussion with Gamaliel, ' It is written in your law.'—The statistics are not without significance. Matt. (5), Mark (6), Luke (5), 11 occurrences being in the title ' King of the Jews ' ; John (67).

[2] Cp. Lect. IV., p. 346.

[3] The prominence of this theme in the Gospel appears in the frequency of the terms : ' to bear witness,' Gospel (31), 1 John (6), 3 John (4) ; Synoptics (0) : ' witness ' or ' testimony,' Gospel (14), 1 John (6), 3 John (1) : Mark xiv. 55, 56, 57, 59, Luke xxii. 71, all at the trial.

who vouches for him? It is a part of the numerical symbolism pervading the book that there is a sevenfold scheme of attestation. First of all John is introduced as sent from God to bear witness of the light (i. 7, 19); he has beheld the Spirit descending as a dove and abiding upon Jesus, and borne witness that this is the Son of God (i. 34). When Jesus is charged with calling God his own Father (v. 18), he refers to John's declaration (v. 33), only, however, to set it aside in favour of a more august authority; he, too, had been sent, and the Father who sent him had borne witness to him (ver. 37). Commentators differ as to the mode in which this sublime testimony was afforded. Was it in the Scriptures (ver. 39), or specially through the prophets, or by the divine Voice at the Baptism? The context perhaps supplies the best explanation—

> 'The works which the Father hath given me to accomplish, the very works that I do, bear witness of me that the Father hath sent me.'

These works, again, are arranged in a sevenfold scheme; (1) the water at the Cana wedding is changed to wine; (2) a nobleman's son is healed at Capernaum (cp. Luke vii. 2-10); (3) a cripple is cured at Bethesda (v. 8; cp. Mark ii. 11); (4) five thousand are fed (cp. Mark vi. 44); (5) Jesus walks on the water (*ibid.* 48); (6) a blind man's sight is restored; (7) Lazarus is raised from the dead, and Jesus is finally presented as the Resurrection and the Life. Behind the works lie the Scriptures which were regarded as sources or guarantees of eternal life; had not Moses written of him (v. 46), and Abraham rejoiced to see his day (viii. 56), and Isaiah seen his glory (xii. 41)? They, therefore, testified of him. Thus, besides Christ's own self-declarations (1) he can summon to the great adjudication (2) the Father himself; (3) Abraham the founder of the nation, Moses its law-giver, Isaiah, chief of its prophets; (4) the latest messenger from God; (5) his own works of wonder and mercy; (6) the disciples who had been with him from the beginning (xv. 27); and lastly (7) the Spirit of truth whom he would send from the

Father (xv. 26). With such a body of testimony the victory of the Fellowship should be secure.[1]

Christianity, then, as it is carried forth into the world, is in one sense rooted in Judaism. Salvation, Jesus tells the Samaritan woman, is of the Jews. But whereas the primitive traditions present him as moving among his own people as one of themselves, sharing their common life, watching their occupations, sympathising with their toils and sufferings, the lover of children, identifying himself with their religious hopes and fears as he spoke to them of ' my father ' and ' your father,' the religion of the Church which produced the Gospel is not a real development out of Judaism. The Jews to whom Jesus speaks are not like the common people who ' heard him gladly ' (Mark xii. 37). He has himself come down from heaven. He brings new truth which he has heard from the Father, and the men and women around him cannot apprehend it. The tumultuous activity of Jesus in his early ministry, his association with publicans and sinners which brought on him the malicious accusations of gluttony and drunkenness, the zeal with which he sought the outcasts whom he might redeem, led his friends, Mark tells us, to fear that he was beside himself, and attempt to restrain him (iii. 21). The charge reappears in the coarsest form in John, ' Thou art a Samaritan and hast a devil ' (viii. 48). In the vivid style of prophetic speech the Baptist could denounce his contemporaries as the ' offspring of vipers,' and Jesus did not shrink from flinging the same epithet at the Pharisees (Matt. xii. 24, 34). When some Jews out of the crowd at the feast, who have been repeatedly unintelligent and hostile, have at last believed him (John viii. 31), the controversy starts again immediately with increasing bitterness until at last Jesus hurls at his new converts the terrible explanation of their obtuseness and enmity,— ' Why do ye not understand my speech ? Because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are out of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father it is your will to do '

[1] The ' young men ' have already ' overcome the evil one ' (1 John ii. 13, 14 ; John xvi. 33 ; cp. Apoc. ii. 7). On uses of the number seven, cp. on the Apocalypse, Lect. I, p. 29.

(vv. 43, 44). And in one of those sharp contrasts which perplex the student, he declares 'All that came before me are thieves and robbers' (x. 8). Who are these predecessors who are thus ruthlessly condemned? It is one of the dark passages of the Gospel, implying at first sight a denial of the apparent historic dependence of Christianity on Judaism.[1] It was really an entirely new gift from heaven to earth. It had no country, no ancestry. It was born not of man, but of God. 'You are from beneath, I am from above' (viii. 23). 'I know whence I came' (viii. 14).

II

The Fellowship for which the Gospel was written was, of course, founded upon the belief that Jesus was the Messiah or Christ. But what was his nature in that dignity? The Gospel added 'the Son of God,' and sought to establish his divine character. There were, then, Christians who denied it, and in the arguments addressed to the Jews the Evangelist endeavours to persuade believers who claimed the Christian name but refused to regard him as more than man. In the *Commentary on the Apocalypse* by Victorinus of Pettau in Upper Pannonia (the modern Styria), who suffered martyrdom in the persecution instituted by Diocletian in 304,—some two centuries after the Gospel was written—it was said that 'when Valentinus and Cerinthus and Ebion and others of the school of Satan were spread throughout the world, all the bishops of the neighbouring provinces came to John, and constrained him to commit his own testimony to writing.'[2] The tradition represented by the Canon of Muratori[3] has been further expanded and defined by reference to three specific forms of error which the Gospel sought to counteract. Of Valentinus and Cerinthus we shall hear again, but who was Ebion?

Among the different forms of heresy described by Irenæus (about 185) was that of the 'Ebionites,' or

[1] Cp. below, Lect. V, p. 388[2].

[2] Ed. Haussleiter (1916), p. 94.

[3] Cp. Lect. I, *ante*, p. 226.

'Poor Men,' who here make their first appearance by name in Christian literature.[1] The epithet was variously explained by their critics out of the spiritual poverty of the Jewish Law which they continued to observe, or the meanness of their opinions about Christ, or their lack of intelligence, or (best, perhaps) their needy circumstances. They were the survivors and heirs of the Jewish Christians of Palestine, for whose communities an imaginary founder was provided under the name of Ebion.[2]

When the disciples gathered themselves together in Jerusalem after the tragedy of the crucifixion, convinced that their Master still lived above the sky, they continued the regular observances of the Mosaic Law. It was the gift of heaven to Israel alone among the nations of the earth, the sign of God's choice of them for his own inheritance. The Apostles worshipped and taught in the Temple; they observed the Sabbath; they kept the rules of food, the distinctions between clean and unclean, the lustrations after the contraction of impurity. For their converts in Palestine this practice raised no difficulty. They were Jews who believed that the Messiah had appeared in the person of Jesus and would come again as Son of Man to judge the earth. His own brother, James, lived the ascetic life of an ancient Nazirite until his martyrdom (61 A.D.), eating no meat and drinking no wine, spending his days in the Temple in prayer until his knees grew as hard as a camel's, and by his strict observance gaining the name 'the Righteous.'[3] After the execution of James the son of Zebedee he became president of the Church, with John and Peter at his side. When he in his turn had perished it was not long before the first notes were heard of the coming storm. Wild hopes were roused for the recovery of the national independence. Before the Roman terror set in (66-70 A.D.) which ended in the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple,

[1] Iren. i. 26, 2.

[2] First mentioned by Tertullian, *De Praescript. Hæreticorum*, xxxiii.

[3] See the account given by Hegesippus (quoted by Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* ii. 23) and the interesting treatment of it by Prof. Burkitt, *Christian Beginnings* (1924), p. 57. Josephus mentions his martyrdom, *Antiquities*, xx. 9, 1.

the community at Jerusalem was broken up. Tradition told of a prophetic warning 'vouchsafed to approved men before the war,' commanding the Christians to escape beyond the Jordan, and make their home in a city named Pella. There the fugitives first established themselves in exile, and they gradually spread into the surrounding districts. Their poverty gained for them in later days the epithet 'The Poor.' The fall of the Temple brought the whole sacrificial system to an end, but the observance of the specific injunctions of the Law such as circumcision, the hallowing of the Sabbath, and the dietary rules, was still cherished as a part of religious duty. They clung pathetically to their ancient usages. The missionaries of the new faith among alien peoples could not forget that they were Jews, and questions soon arose as to the conditions of intercourse with non-Jews, their reception into the community, and the nature of the Messiah in whom they were invited to believe.

None of their own literature survives, and their opinions can only be gathered from brief and unsympathetic notices by their opponents. Though they gradually made their way into Syria, and some of their views appear to have been held by Cerinthus at Ephesus, Irenæus does not seem to have been personally acquainted with them, and probably knew them only by repute. Differences both of opinion and practice naturally arose among them, but these were not acute enough to produce separate organisations. They were content with one Gospel, under the name of Matthew, though they did not all accept the doctrine of the Virgin birth.[1] For them Jesus was a man, more righteous, prudent, wise, than other men, who was chosen to be the Messiah in virtue of this superiority. He was 'justified' for this function by his perfect fulfilment of the Law, and had any other man done so he would have become Christ.[2] On this exemplar of complete obedience to the heavenly will, the Christ descended at

[1] Irenæus, iii. 27, 7; iv. 33, 4; v. 1, 3. The Gospel was probably akin to the Gospel according to the Hebrews, in which the Holy Spirit was designated the Mother of Christ.

[2] Hippolytus, *Refutation*, etc., vii. 22.

the baptism of Jesus from on high, enabling him to proclaim the unknown Father, and perform miracles.[1] To the heavenly voice recorded in Matt. iii. 17 a second utterance was added, 'This day have I begotten thee'; it was the moment when Jesus by divine 'adoption' became 'Son of God.'[2] His function was thus that of Revealer. The spiritual Christ, however, was impassible, and consequently departed from Jesus before the crucifixion, who then suffered as man and rose again on the third day.[1] His death, therefore, played no part in the scheme of redemption. It was open to any who achieved the same complete observance of legal obligation themselves to become Christs.[3]

This type of Christianity could find no place for the Apostle Paul. Its extremer form repudiated him as an apostate from the Law. Justin, however, who had been born at Neapolis (the ancient Shechem, the modern Nablous) in the heart of Palestine, was acquainted with two varieties. Some conservatives required Gentile converts to conform to the traditional ordinances and refused all intercourse with those who would not follow the Mosaic rules, an exclusiveness of which he did not approve, though he was willing to admit that such believers who took on themselves the whole obligation would not be excluded thereby from salvation. On the other hand were the more liberal who refrained from imposing these demands though fulfilling them themselves, they ought to be received in all things as kinsmen and brethren.[4] Both groups, however, clung to humanitarian views of the person of Christ, and when the rationalism of later days broke out at Rome or Antioch, its filiation with a mythical founder was arranged, and its teachers were linked in succession to the imaginary Ebion.[5]

[1] Iren. i. 26, 2.

[2] Cp. Streeter, *The Four Gospels*, who regards this as the original reading in Luke iii. 22, and derives it from Q, pp. 143, 148. The word 'beloved' is introduced by Clement, and does not occur in D or the Latin MSS. named.

[3] Hippolytus, *Refutation*, etc., vii. 22. [4] *Dialogue*, xlvii.

[5] There were other currents of opposition to the doctrine of the Deity of Christ. In the Clementine Homilies Peter asserts that Jesus

III

'If ye love me,' says Jesus, 'ye will keep my commandments' (xiv. 15). It is a familiar phrase of Jewish piety. But it does not include the traditions of the Scribes and Pharisees which he elsewhere bids his disciples do and observe (Matt. xxiii. 3). In the Johannine view the question of legal duty has no longer any significance. The destruction of the Temple is announced at the outset. The old Covenant will come to an end. It is to be replaced by the body of Christ, prefiguring the resurrection after three days according to the Scriptures, and holding within it the mystical identification of his body with the Church (ii. 21).[1] Thus the Jerusalem worship, founded on the Law given by Moses, will disappear like the Samaritan before the worship in spirit and in truth, founded on the grace and truth which came by Christ. Within the Fellowship animal sacrifice is superseded by the consecrated Lamb of God. Rites of purification are needed no more for those who are 'born out of God.' The apocalyptic outlook is completely transformed. Everlasting life is not something to be awarded at a future judgment seat to those who have done well, it is a spiritual energy of eternal being in knowledge and love. Such life is communicated by Christ to those who have been given to him by the Father. To him has been granted the august privilege to have life in himself, so that he can impart it to others. This it is which constitutes the absolute character of Christianity. Its author is not of earth. He shared God's glory or ever the world was. 'Before Abraham came, I *am*' (viii. 58).

This is the note of eternity which sounds through the whole Gospel from the opening to the close. Over against the Judeo-Christian communities beyond the Jordan, heirs

did not proclaim himself to be God, though he blessed him who called him God's Son. When Simon Magus presses him to admit that he who comes from God is God, he replies that what is 'begotten' is not the same as the 'Unbegotten,' and cannot be designated by the same name (xvi. 15).

[1] Cp. Lect. V, p. 371.

of the Church at Jerusalem, cherishing a human Messiah who attained his dignity by perfect obedience and the complete fulfilment of the Law, stood the Hellenic world with philosophical speculations and ideals of its own. When Christianity was carried into it by the first missionaries, followed by the Apostle Paul, and Greeks were brought into the new communities beside Jews, the question of their admission as co-believers at once became urgent. Must they conform to Jewish practice and accept all its legal obligations? At Jerusalem John, son of Zebedee, was one of the three 'Pillars' before whom Paul pleaded the cause of the Gentiles. The conflict was for a time acute. But the Fourth Evangelist seems unaware that there had been any conflict at all. The problem is not presented as a *chose jugée*, it is absolutely ignored. The victory is announced before ever the difficulty had arisen. Paul founds himself on his own experience as a preacher. He has witnessed the triumphal progress of the Gospel, making Jew and Greek, barbarian, Scythian, bond and free, all one in Christ. He has to justify the unexpected ways of Providence in bringing the Gentiles in before Israel, the heirs of the promise. He must explain the painful fact that his countrymen refuse the proffered salvation; he must prove by strange arguments that the Law contained within itself the grounds of its own abolition. Yet he looks forward to the action of the divine mercy which will finally encompass all.

On the other hand, while the Johannine Jesus announces his departure to a sphere whither the Jews cannot come, and leaves them to die in their sin (viii. 21), the salvation brought by Christ is really universal. With the broadest outlook the Baptist acclaims him as the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. Caiaphas declares that it was expedient that Jesus should die for the nation, and not for the nation only but also that he might gather into one the children of God that are scattered abroad (xi. 51 f.); and this is expressly regarded as prophecy; it is no private opinion, it is a divine oracle. In the controversy between Gerizim and Jerusalem

religion is lifted above all local forms; worship in spirit and in truth can be confined to no place or priesthood. Christianity is thus at the outset designed for all. Its expansion was not realised through the logic of facts as the result of the labours of the Apostle Paul, nor as the issue of its rejection by the Jews as described in the Acts, it was part of the Founder's purpose: 'Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd' (x. 16). So pious Greeks, who have come up to worship, seek to see Jesus (xii. 20 ff.). They apply to Andrew and Philip, the two of the Twelve who bear Greek names, and are elsewhere bracketed together. Their wish, indeed, is not consummated, for they vanish like shadows, and the reply of Jesus to the request conveyed by the disciples ignores them. But a study of the Fourth Gospel beside the letters to the Galatians and Romans shows that the whole question has been lifted on to a new level. The great mystery, the contemplation of which filled the Apostle Paul with so much joy, breaking down the partition wall between Jew and Gentile, and uniting all in one family in heaven and earth, is no more in view. Jesus is from the outset the Light of the World. Had this been part of the primitive teaching, it could not have been locked up in one single breast, and only promulgated when the conflict was done. For John the conflict is not so much as over; it has never existed. With the Gospel in his heart, how could the future Evangelist have been once a 'pillar' of the circumcision at Jerusalem?

Not less significant of the progress of Christian thought is the relation of the Evangelist's doctrine of the person of Christ as Son of God to that of his great predecessor. It is difficult to adopt the suggestion (which even won the support of the late Prof. Bousset [1]) that it was the invention of the Apostle Paul. Its use by the High Priest at the trial—'Art thou the Son of the Blessed?'—its implicit presence in the second Psalm—appear to guarantee its place in one order of Messianic conceptions. But the Apostle gave to it a more exalted sense as he reflected on

[1] *Kyrios Christos* (1913), p. 181.

the significance of the resurrection, which afforded a practical definition of Christ's true nature. The wondrous experience which he interpreted as union with his heavenly Lord (whose 'slave' he delighted to call himself), expressed in alternative terms of life in Christ or life in Spirit, for the Lord, he said, *is* the Spirit,—an equation which puts all creeds and system-builders to nought—carried with it far-reaching issues. He was, indeed, Son of man, destined to be ultimately subjected to the Father, who would have first subjected all his enemies to him, that God might be all in all.[1] But his humanity was not of earth, but of heaven. From the worlds above he had been sent to be born of woman, born under the Law. True, his flesh was only in 'the likeness of sin's flesh' (Rom. viii. 3), not its actuality, a conception verging on Docetism. The cross provided the supreme test of his obedience, which secured for him the name of Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Phil. ii. 9 ff.). It was a common title of gods all round the Eastern Mediterranean, Egyptian, Syrian, Greek. Jewish piety also recognised an order of 'lordships' in the worlds above. To Paul, though others might invoke 'lords many,' there was but one, Jesus Christ (1 Cor. viii. 6), 'through whom are all things.' What, then, were these 'all things'? Did they belong to the sphere of souls alone, the gifts and graces needful for salvation, or did they include the whole visible scene? To the Colossians, in after years, he held out the latter view (i. 15). The Son of God, once sent into this world as Son of David (Rom. i. 3), was, in fact, the instrument or agent of creation; but though creator, he was himself created, before all things, yet not eternal but 'first-born.' The impassioned energy of the Apostle, the intensity of his own moral experience, the tumultuousness of his emotion, have no parallel in the Elder's delineation of the peace bequeathed by Christ to his followers. In the struggle between the flesh and the spirit Paul writes, 'If by the

[1] The Apostle does not use the term 'Son of man,' which was not a natural Greek expression, but his reference in 1 Cor. xv. 27 to Ps. viii. 7 shows that he was quite familiar with it. Its reappearance in the Fourth Gospel is discussed below, Lect. IV, p. 348 ff.

spirit you slay the deeds of the body, you shall live' (Rom. viii. 13). 'We know,' it is said in the next generation, 'that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren' (1 John iii. 14). For John the good soldier whom Paul summoned to the fight has doffed his armour and sheathed his sword; the victory over the world is won.

IV

The Apostle Paul had been brought up at Tarsus, famous as a seat of Stoic teaching, in the full stream of the manifold influences now recognised under the term Hellenism. Ephesus was another centre of similar culture, where the faiths of the East and the philosophies of the West encountered each other. When some of the members of the Christian Fellowship undertook to present the life and teaching of their Founder, they could only portray him as they had come to view him in the light of the traditions which they had cherished and the experience of their own communion. The long residence of the Apostle Paul had doubtless implanted in an earlier generation of believers a transcendental conception of Jesus which their successors had developed still further. His favourite title 'Lord,' with its implied subordination beneath 'One God, the Father,' is not employed (as Luke, for example, employs it in narrative) until after the resurrection, when Thomas can add to it the higher term, 'My Lord and my God' (xx. 28).[1] In writing a biography instead of a theological tract or exposition, it was inevitable that Christ's teaching should be expressed in the first person, whether in argument with his opponents or in counsel to his friends. This was a part of current literary method. From the days of Thucydides it had been the custom of the historian to express the different currents of thought and feeling arising out of any given

[1] In iv. 1 the text has probably undergone some adjustment. Early texts (ℵD) read 'Jesus.' The confused narrative of vi. 22, 23, and the omission of the clause about the Lord's thanksgiving in D together with old Latin and Syriac texts makes the occurrence uncertain. xi. 2 is widely recognised as an addition. Bousset, *Kyrios Christos*, p. 97 [3].

situation by means of speeches attributed to his various characters. Roman usage followed Greek models. Sallust, for example, composes a debate in the Senate on the fate of Catiline much as Milton composes the addresses of the fallen Angels in the council in Hell. Josephus followed the same practice to commend his histories to Western readers. The language of the speakers naturally reflected the author's view of the circumstances described. Even the Synoptic Gospels show how the words of Jesus might be adapted to later conditions, and alien material might be combined with them. It is very generally recognised that the prophecy about the Last Things attributed to Jesus on the Mount of Olives in Mark xiii. has been shaped in view of later events with the incorporation of predictions which he never uttered. Matthew masses his collections of sayings into consecutive discourses which in the same way show the traces of subsequent reflection. Luke provides Peter and Stephen and Paul with similar means of expression in the book of Acts. The classical instance in the sphere of philosophy is, of course, the contrast between the two representations of Socrates by his disciples Xenophon and Plato, which has been so often applied to the differences between the First Three Gospels and the Fourth since the days of Schleiermacher.[1] The discourses of Jesus are not the authoritative deliverances of the Eternal Word, they are the testimonies of faith, views of religious truth, utterances of devotion, conceived in the spirit of what came to be called *Gnosis* or ' knowledge.'

The transfer of the story of Jesus from Jerusalem to Ephesus not only involved the adoption of a new literary method, it also opened the way to a new outlook. If the Law was a tutor to bring the Jews to Christ, Philosophy, said the wise and gentle Clement of Alexandria, performed the same function for the Greeks. Platonists, Pythagoreans, and Stoics, were all concerned along cognate

[1] See the admirable chapter on ' The Writer's Idea of Biography ' in *The Ephesian Gospel* by Prof. Gardner; Dr. Strachan, *The Fourth Gospel* (1917), p. 2; and the frank language of Canon Streeter, *The Four Gospels*, p. 370.

lines of thought with the same problems of human experience, the interpretation of the world, the meaning of life, the powers of man's nature, the being of God ; and when the Fourth Evangelist introduced the person of Christ under the form of the Logos, the alliance with Greek metaphysic, which had been already begun by the Apostle Paul and carried further by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, was definitely established. Philo of Alexandria, whose long life overlapped that of Jesus at both ends (*c.* 20 B.C. to 50 A.D.), employed the teachings of the Schools (especially of Plato) to commend the religion of his people to the cultivated readers of the great university city. Freely using the method of allegory, he sought by irregular expositions of the sacred Law to present it as a vehicle of higher spiritual thought, and to show how 'the good man is nourished not on earthly but on heavenly knowledge.' [1] How far the Evangelist owed anything directly to Philo's actual writings is still a matter of discussion ; but when Apollos, 'mighty in the Scriptures,' was heard in the synagogue at Ephesus, had he nothing to say to the brethren about the teacher whom he had left behind in his library in Egypt ? [2]

The contrast between 'earthly and heavenly things' had been already adopted into Jewish piety in the Wisdom of Solomon (ix. 16), and like its Pauline counterpart between the 'seen' and the 'not-seen,' the 'temporal' and the 'eternal,' can be traced back to the Platonic idealism. But it was reinforced in the lands around the Eastern Mediterranean by other influences than those of Athens. The rise and fall of empires beyond the Euphrates, the conquests of Cyrus and Alexander the Great, had produced strange minglings of religions. There were all sorts of speculations concerning the origin of the universe, and the character and operation of the powers directing it ; the constitution of man and the causes of his evil plight ; the method of his rescue, the agent of his

[1] *Allegories of the Sacred Laws*, iii. 58 (Cohn, i. p. 150, § 168) ; cp. John iii. 12.

[2] Cp. on the Logos, Lect. III, p. 299 ; and on the 'knowledge' of God, Lect. VI, p. 447 ff.

deliverance, and the mode by which the ultimate Deity revealed himself. From Babylon came a doctrine of two worlds, an upper and a lower. Like the 'Dwelling' of Exodus (xxv. 40) the objects beneath had their counterparts above. The destinies of earth were already written in the skies. In the motions of the stars were hidden the secrets of the future, and men seemed to be caught in the grip of irrevocable fate. On to this was grafted the Persian dualism of light and darkness and its moral counterparts, truth and falsehood, good and evil, dividing all the forces of nature into two vast armies, where victory might alternate for a time in strange vicissitudes, but the final triumph of righteousness was sure. Once more the Greek antithesis between spirit and matter, especially in the Platonic form of the contrast between the world of ideas and the world of sense, was readily brought into this ferment. The human soul was supposed to have once belonged to the realm of light, and fallen from its high estate. Imprisoned in a fleshly form it strove to return to its true sphere, but in its inability to do so unaided it needed the help of a Deliverer. The purpose of the world-process was the redemption of the spirit of man by a divine Saviour, who would free it from its entanglements and lead it back to the world of light.

Hints and suggestions of some of these modes of thought were widely spread in different combinations, and it was impossible for a new faith like Christianity, making its way from city to city, to escape contact with them. The little communities offered excellent fishing-ground for the champions of a faith at once older and still newer. Simon the Mage was counted in the next century the first of the heretics whose fantastic speculations threatened the unity of the Church under the general name of Gnosticism. They were ultimately founded on fundamental contrasts of human experience, and especially on the moral dualism of good and evil, expressed in such antitheses as recur repeatedly (for example) in the Fourth Gospel between flesh and spirit, truth and falsehood, love and hate, above and beneath, heavenly and earthly, life and death. This was, of course, no new language to Judaism. Ever since

Eve plucked the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil there had been some sort of 'Gnosis' among the teachers of Israel. Light and darkness provided an obvious symbolism for prophetic thought. 'The day of the Lord,' threatens Amos, 'will be darkness and not light.' 'See,' cries the Deuteronomic Moses, 'I have set before thee life and good, and death and evil, therefore choose life that ye may live.' 'I form the light and create darkness, I make peace and create evil,' says the Babylonian prophet in the name of Yahweh; but the welfare and calamity which Israel experiences are historic disciplines, not spiritual entities; they are national vicissitudes not metaphysical realities. But as Israel came into contact with Greek thought new tones are heard in later literature. Common experience readily suggested numerous groups of opposites. The Pythagoreans (according to Aristotle) reckoned ten pairs of ἀρχαί or 'principles,' such as one and many, right and left, male and female, light and darkness, good and evil. The Son of Sirach contemplates fire and water, poverty and riches, and sums up the lot of man thus—'Good is set over against evil and life over against death, the sinner over against the godly, thus look on all the works of the Most High, two and two, one against another.'[1] By the end of the second century B.C. the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*,[2] afterwards incorporated by appropriate additions into Christianity, exhibit the same mood of thought yet more clearly. The 'knowledge of the Lord' had been from of old a summary expression for religion, and was chiefly understood on its ethical side. It was not a mystery, but a way of life. It was now summed up in the Law around which in its ideal or heavenly counterpart all truth was gathered. So it was promised to Levi (iv. 2, 3) that he should become a Son to the Most High and a Minister of his Presence, 'The light of knowledge shalt thou light up in Jacob, as the sun shalt thou be to all the seed of Israel.' 'The light of the Law,' says Levi (xiv. 4), 'was given to lighten every man,' and this was expanded

[1] Ecclus. xi. 14; xv. 16; xxxiii. 14, 15, about 190 B.C.

[2] Translated by Dr. Charles (1908).

by a later writer in the form, 'Thou givest light to those above and to those below, and to all that come into the world.'[1] Asher (i. 3) points to two Ways, the oppositions of good and evil, death and life (v. 2, 3), night and day, darkness and light, truth and falsehood. Gad tells of hatred and love, lying and truth, and urges repentance which drives away darkness, enlightens the eye, gives knowledge to the soul, and leads the mind to salvation (v. 7, vi. 1). Naphtali warns his children, 'While ye are in darkness, ye cannot do the works of light' (ii. 10). 'Love the truth,' urges Reuben (iii. 9), 'and it will keep you,' and this truth is not a mere statement, it is no form of words, but the summary expression of all kinds of moral and spiritual realities. It is, therefore, as in Johannine phrase (iii. 21), something to be *done*, 'I adjure you by the God of heaven to do truth each one to his neighbour, and to entertain love each one for his brother' (Levi, vi. 9); and Benjamin exhorts, 'Do ye, therefore, each one truth to his neighbour, and keep the Law of the Lord and his commandments' (x. 3), just as Tobit exhorted his scattered countrymen 'to do truth' before God (xiii. 6).[2] The experience of Joseph touches a loftier note of divine communion :[3]

'If ye follow after chastity and purity with patience and prayer, with fasting and humility, the Lord will dwell in you, because he loveth chastity. And wherever the Most High dwelleth, even though envy or slavery or slander befalleth (a man), the Lord who dwelleth in him for the sake of his chastity not only delivereth him from evil but exalteth and glorifieth him even as me.'

Devotional idioms differ, and new notes were sounded in the remarkable collection of hymns brought to light

[1] Schlatter, *Die Sprache und Heimat des vierten Evangelisten* (1902) p. 19.

[2] The phrase is, of course, an ancient phrase in the sense of acting faithfully or loyally, *e.g.* 2 Sam. ii. 6 (Hebr.); but in later usage it acquires a higher meaning as 'truth' is invested with a transcendental character.

[3] x. 2, 3. Keeping the commandment brings the same privilege of divine indwelling (though the verb is different; cp. Eph. iii. 17) as in John. 'Exalt' and 'glorify' belong to the Johannine vocabulary, with heightened application.

from a Syriac text in 1909 by Dr. Rendel Harris, and entitled the 'Odes of Solomon.' They were quoted by the Latin writer Lactantius in the fourth century, and in the preceding century five of them had been incorporated in a Gnostic book called *Pistis-Sophia* ('Faith-Wisdom') still extant in Coptic. Like the Testaments in their present form they have been adopted into Christianity, but there is good reason to suppose that some at any rate may have been originally Jewish.[1] They occasionally speak of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the Word, the Lord and the Beloved; but they never name Jesus, or quote his teaching or allude to his cross. There are no references to the sacraments or the Church; no allusions to the kingdom of God or to the coming of the Son of Man. The authors are not free from persecution, but there are no reminiscences of Gospel warnings. Yet they represent a piety akin to the Johannine. 'I should not have known how to love the Lord,' exclaims the poet, 'if he had not loved me.'[2] Here are songs of love and faith and hope. The constant contrasts of truth and falsehood, life and death, and the change from darkness to light, fill the poet's thought. They point the way 'of truth,' they tell of 'living water,' they open visions of grace, salvation, peace. The atmosphere is that of a common religious experience, but the imagery in which it is often expressed is not that of the New Testament. There is a conflict and a victory, 'All those who have overcome shall be written in his book.'[3] And there is a winning of knowledge 'from the beginning even to the end,' as the poet 'ran in his way in peace, even in the way of truth,' so that he 'was established upon the rock of truth' where the Most

[1] Harnack agrees with Dr. Harris that Ode iv. must be dated somewhere about 73 A.D. Cp. his edition of Flemming's translation (1910), and Labourt and Battiffol (1911). The most recent translator, Prof. Gressmann of Berlin, in Hennecke's *Neutest. Apokryphen* [2], ascribes them to a Jewish-Christian Gnostic, early in the second century A.D.

[2] iii. 3. Cp. 1 John iv. 19. But 'neither here nor elsewhere,' says Dr. Harris *apropos* of vi, p. 96, 'does it seem possible definitely to convict the Psalms of having borrowed from St. John.'

[3] Cp. Rev. ii. 7, and the numerous references to inscription in the book of life. Cp. Harnack, 118.

High had set him up (xi. 3-5). The joyous picture of the Advent of the Most High is founded on the old prophetic conception of the spread of the knowledge of the Lord over the earth, when he gives a mouth to his creation to praise him (vii. 19 ff.) :

> The Most High shall be known in His saints, to announce to those that have songs of the coming of the Lord :
> That they may go forth to meet Him, and may sing to Him with joy and with the harp of many tones.
> The seers shall come before Him, and they shall be seen before Him,
> And they shall praise the Lord for His love, because He is near and beholdeth ;
> And hatred shall be taken from the earth, and along with jealousy it shall be drowned,
> For ignorance hath been destroyed, because the knowledge of the Lord hath arrived.[1]

These are the songs of a Community. There was a Jewish Gnosticism in the first century, founded on the mysteries of the ' Creation ' (Gen. i.) and the ' Chariot,' the name given to the solemn vision described by Ezekiel (i.). Various Oriental influences were at work in Syria. Could such hymns have arisen along with secret speculations among the Essenes by the Dead Sea, or the Therapeutæ of Egypt ? The clue is lost, but they point originally to a type of piety founded on ' knowledge,' whether developed in Palestine or beyond its borders, which was not far from that of prophets and disciples at Ephesus.[2]

V

Other motives entered in from another side. Judaism had its own provisions for sin, and its aspirations in withdrawal from the world were directed to the gain of truth,

[1] This seems clearly to be founded on Jewish ideas of the Divine Advent. Cp. Harnack and Flemming *in loc.*

[2] In Reitzenstein's treatise *Das Iranische Erlösungsmysterium* (1921) he has pointed out affinities between Ode xi and Mandaean speculation (p. 144) ; cp. Note below, p. 287.

to see more and to know more, and the answer came through inward revelation. But there was another line of approach to the blessed life. Greece had been deeply moved in the sixth century B.C. by the preachers who in the name of Orpheus bade men beware of their evil ways. They were involved in a vast series of lives, and for each deed of wrong they must pay the penalty in the next world. There were visions of judgment, scenes of torment and felicity, and communities were formed in due time to live the life of preparatory purity, which spread along the Mediterranean from Asia Minor to South Italy. It was no mean conception which could win the sympathy of Pythagoras, Pindar, Plato. Rules of abstinence and devotion guided the believer's conduct and nourished his aspirations. Hymns under the founder's name supported his worship and quickened his emotions. Mystical speculations about the world and the unity of the gods provided him with themes for meditation. Holy rites even sought to lighten the lot of those who had passed into the world beyond the grave. At length the soul could look forward to 'escape from the sorrowful weary wheel,' that chain of existences in which the body was, as Plato said, 'a tomb,' and might become immortal, or as the later phrase ran 'be made divine.' Here in due course it became natural to seek divine aid. As the faithful united in common prayer, 'Hear me with kindly mind' sang the ministrant to Apollo, 'as I pray for the people, . . . hear me, O Blessed, who savest the initiated.'[1] The figure of a Saviour begins indistinctly to appear. Together with its eschatological doctrines Orphism came to play no inconsiderable part in the environment of Christianity whether Orthodox or Gnostic. Through the story of his Descent into the world below Orpheus was associated with the idea of immortality; he brought peace into the strife of beasts; he was himself the Shepherd of believers. Such likeness of spirit did the primitive Christians see in him to their own Jesus that they painted his figure on the walls of their catacombs as the musician subduing savage lions, or carved

[1] *Orphica*, ed. Abel (1885), hymn xxxiv. 10, p. 76.

it on their sarcophagi, in close connexion with the type of the Good Shepherd.[1]

The Orphic rites were widely spread through the Eastern Mediterranean lands, but the most famous Greek mysteries were located at Eleusis, twelve miles from Athens on the bay of Salamis. They had acquired in the first century of our era an immense renown. Open to all Greece since the days of the Homeric hymn to Demeter, they had gradually extended their influence till the entry was widened to include all Roman citizens. But the professors of unhallowed rites were not admitted ; Apollonius of Tyana was excluded as a wandering magician, and the Emperor Nero was refused admission as a homicide. There were rites of purification and abstinences from forbidden meats ; sacred objects were exhibited ; the initiated were made partakers of some consecrated food ; the chief officer sought to rouse in the participants the emotions of wonder, awe, sympathy, reverence, which prepared them for a solemn manifestation of the Deity. What was actually seen no man might tell. But those who had passed out of darkness into light believed that they had been admitted to divine communion and were thereby endowed with immortality.

With the conquest of Egypt and Western Asia by Alexander the Great the way was opened for fresh combinations. When the city states lost their independence, the old religions were of little avail. New deities, new science, new products of every description, were brought to the great centres of population, and were gradually distributed by the various means of communication which the establishment of peace under the rule of Rome at length made more secure. Sailors promoted the worship of the Egyptian Isis at Mediterranean ports. Soldiers from the East devoted to the worship of Mithra carried their cultus through Europe, and raised their altars in this country as far north as the Roman Wall. An immense mingling of ideas was fostered by the establishment of a common language, and deities with similar functions were

[1] On the Mystery Religions generally, cp. the most recent English study by Prof. Angus, *The Mystery Religions and Christianity* (1925).

blended and identified. The Egyptian Isis, to whom a temple was erected in Rome in 38 A.D. gained a position of extraordinary eminence,[1] and the description of her mysteries by Apuleius in the second century shows what personal devotion and glowing piety the rites evoked. Months, or even years, were spent by those who sought the service of the goddess. The demands for chastity and abstinence were stern. The candidate was at length purified by sprinkling from the font, and in the culmination of his consecration in the very heart of the sanctuary he seemed to himself to approach the unseen world and return. 'I drew nigh to the confines of death, I trod the threshold of Proserpine, I was borne through all the elements and returned to earth again.' He had seen the sun gleaming in splendour at the dead of night, he had been made to realise his oneness with the forces which gave life to the world, he had worshipped the gods face to face. Last of all he was mystically united with the Sun-god, the mysterious Deity for ever dying and for ever re-born, the source of the energies of the universe, and was thus endowed with immortality.[2]

There were other types of ritual in which the assimilation of the believer with death and life was closer still. Osiris had been done to death through the wiles of Set and restored to life by the devoted labours of Isis. The process was symbolically repeated on his worshippers. Other gods also had died and lived again, Dionysus, Attis, Adonis, and thus became 'Saviour Gods.' The devotee of Attis, son of the Great Mother, Cybělê, whose cultus had grown out of half-savage origins in Phrygia, was 'reborn for eternity' through the hideous blood-bath of the *taurobolium*, when he was drenched with the life-giving flood descending on him from a slaughtered bull.[3] Union with the Deity was reached by various means and expressed in various forms. In the liturgy assigned by

[1] See the long list of such identifications—including the Indian Māyā—in *Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, xi. No. 1380, p. 198, l. 103, 'Among the Indians Maia.'

[2] Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*, xi, tr. Butler. Cp. J. E. C., *Phases of Early Christianity*, p. 222 ff.

[3] *Ante*, p. 68.

Dieterich to Mithra-worship the suppliant prayed that he might be reborn in mind, and that the sacred Spirit might breathe within him, and at the end cried, 'Abide with me in my soul, leave me not.'[1] The fellowship thus achieved might pass into a 'oneness' so close that the believer could say, 'Thou art I, and I thou.'[2] It was the goal of the process of being 'made divine' or immortal which was recognised as the Christian's privilege in the second century onwards, and was briefly expressed by Athanasius in the saying that 'God became man in order that man might become God.'[3] Such union might be cherished by sacred meals, when emotion was heightened at the table of the Deity,[4] or when in an ecstasy of devotion the worshipper reverently beheld his God.

When Christianity was first carried out of Palestine and preached in great cities like Antioch and Tarsus, it was at once exposed to competition with different types of Gentile worship. After his residence at Ephesus Justin, pleading at Rome for the Teacher whom he does not shrink from comparing with the Greek Hermes, urges the claim of 'our mysteries' against those of Dionysus Adonis, Saturn, the Mother of the Gods and Mithra.[5] The influence of the Mysteries upon Christian usage has been long recognised in this country since its discussion by Dr. Hatch,[6] who gathered his evidence from the period when the language and ritual of the Church were well established. But subsequent investigation has carried the inquiry much further back, and suggests the possibility that this influence may be traced already in the days of the Apostle Paul. It is generally recognised that his

[1] *Eine Mithrasliturgie* (1903), pp. 4, 14. Cumont rejected this attribution. The document is rather apocalyptic than liturgical.

[2] Dieterich, *Abraxas* (1893), p. 196, l. 17.

[3] Following Clement and Irenæus; cp. J. E. C., *Phases*, p. 57 f.

[4] Cp. the well-known invitation recovered in one of the Egyptian Papyri, 'Chaeremon invites you dine at the table of the Lord Serapis, to-morrow, 15th, at nine o'clock.' *Oxyrhynch. Pap.* i. No. cx., p. 177.

[5] 1 *Apol.* xxix. 2; *Dial.* lxix. 2; 1 *Apol.* xxv. 1; xxvii. 4; 2 *Apol.* xii. 5; *Dial.* lxx. 1, lxxviii. 6; 1 *Apol.* lxvi. 4. For Justin on Hermes, cp. Lect. III, p. 307, below.

[6] *The Influence of Greek Ideas, etc., upon the Christian Church* (1890).

own outlook on the world was not unaffected by contemporary Hellenistic conceptions. When he reproaches his Galatian converts for turning back again to the 'weak and beggarly Elements' (iv. 9), the *stoicheia* whose bondage he deplores are probably the heavenly bodies which were universally regarded as animated. The planets, in particular, in the astral religion which had passed from Babylonia to the Mediterranean, were believed to exert a constant control over human affairs.[1] Among the wicked 'spirituals' in the 'heavenlies' with which the Christian must wrestle (Eph. vi. 12) are the *kosmokratores*, the 'world-rulers,' a name applied astrologically to this group of 'wanderers.' It was by the machinations of these '*archons* of this æon' that Christ was brought to the cross (1 Cor. ii. 8), and part of the Messiah's work, as Paul saw it, would be to bring them all to nought (1 Cor. xv. 24). No such agencies, no Principalities nor Powers —neither Height (the astrological term for a planet at its nearest approach to the North Pole) nor Depth (the region below the horizon from which the stars ascended) —could ever separate the believer from the love of God in Christ (Rom. viii. 39).[2] The Apostle could thus use the terms of contemporary Hellenistic speculation. For him the impending return of Christ and the marvellous transformation it would involve—'We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed'—was itself a mystery (1 Cor. xv. 51). So he could use its language symbolically as he thought of the vicissitudes of his own life, its plenty and its want, and exclaims, 'I have learned in whatsoever state I am therein to be content' (Phil. iv. 11). The word is literally 'I have been initiated.' His terminology corresponds with that of the Hellenistic religions with their 'Saviour Gods.'[3] Whether this influence affected his conception of the sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and how far it is to be recognised in his presentation of the believer's life as 'in Christ,' are questions to which no answer, even provisionally, can be attempted

[1] Cp. *ante*, pp. 51, 106.

[2] Cp. Lietzmann, *Handbuch zum N.T.*, iii. *in loc.*

[3] Cp. Wendland, *Die Hellenistisch-Römische Kultur* [2] (1912), p. 156.

here.[1] It must be enough to remark that the Gospel preached by Paul at Ephesus was fundamentally different from that of the Ebionite communities at the end of the century, and was, in fact, the foundation on which the Fourth Evangelist built the sanctuary of the knowledge of 'the only true God' and the revealer whom he had sent in Jesus Christ.

There are, indeed, profound differences between the two teachers. The Apostle can never forget that he is a Jew. He is proud of his descent, he is consumed with anxiety for his people, he must justify by extraordinary arguments the apparent preference of Providence for the Gentiles. The Evangelist—if he really was a Jew—only betrays his nationality by his acquaintance with the localities and religious practice of Palestine, and does not shrink from describing the opponents of Jesus as 'devil-born.' From the outset the Gospel is presented in universal terms. By connecting it with the philosophy of the Logos the Evangelist puts it at once into the field of humanity at large. There is no need to prove that the death of the Messiah under the Law has broken its power and abolished its authority. The High Priest himself is made to recognise that Jesus will die to 'gather together into one the children of God that are scattered abroad' (xi. 52). If he announces himself as the world's light, he has first been recognised by the Samaritans as the world's Saviour. So completely does the Johannine Christ assume the issue of Paul's battle for liberty that he can announce his possession already of other sheep not of that fold, and provide for their inclusion in one flock under one Shepherd (x. 16).

In relating the earthly manifestation of the Son of God the Evangelist follows the clue of his predecessor, 'God sent forth his Son' (Gal. iv. 4). This was a mission on a vaster scale than that of Paul to the Gentiles (note the same word, Acts xxii. 21). It involved a descent from the companionship of heaven, the surrender of the 'form'

[1] A whole literature has gathered around them. On the second theme see the admirable essay by Miss M. R. Ely, *Knowledge of God in Johannine Thought* (1925), New York, p. 116 ff. Cp. below, Lect. VI.

of God, the abandonment of the glory which he had with the Father before the world was (xvii. 5 ; Phil. ii. 6). Between the anecdotes of Mark and the elaborate scenes and discourses of John there is a difference only to be explained by the rise of a wholly new conception of the Messiah's person, and (still more significant) the growth of a new consciousness of relation to him. Jewish apocalyptic expectation had, indeed, looked for a Son of Man who had been created before sun or star ; [1] and the Apostle could therefore describe him as the ' first-born of all creation ' (Col. i. 15), adding that to him the actual function of creation was assigned. The Johannine language is less explicit, but it conveys a profounder conception of the timelessness of the relation between the Father and the Son, united in the transcendent experience of mutual knowledge and love. Moreover, it is significant that the ranks of the celestial powers—the thrones and dominions, the principalities and powers—vanish from view. The agent of evil, the ' Ruler of this world,' is himself ' cast out ' (like the demons of an earlier day) that there may be no possible disturbance of the sublime unity in which Father and Son and believers may be perfected in one. This is the equivalent of the life in Christ or in the Spirit which constituted the new type of discipleship in the Pauline Churches. The Fourth Evangelist formulates it differently. He does not, like the Apostle, equate the Lord and the Spirit. When Christ comes it is not the Spirit but the Father himself who may come with him, so that they make their abode together with the keeper of Christ's word (xiv. 23). The function of the Spirit to distribute gifts (1 Cor. xii. 4) passes into that of guidance into the truth, and the Gospel displays what has been already gained in the wider life in which it has been conceived.[2]

VI

The Gnosticism of the Christian Church, it is now recognised, was only a conspicuous product of a much

[1] Enoch xlviii. 3, 4, 6.

[2] On the Pauline affinities in John viii. 32-36, cp. Lect. V, p. 395, below.

wider tendency. This had appeared earlier in different forms, but it found there a fruitful soil, and it produced a rank and rapid growth. Like the Path of Knowledge which had long been trodden by the Hindu devotees in search of union with the Deity in contrast to the Path of Works, of ritual duty and the householder's life, it sometimes demanded austere self-denials, but unlike its Indian counterpart it sometimes opened the way to licence.[1] The guardians of the faith were naturally active in repelling it. When Victorinus of Pettau described the bishops of the neighbouring provinces as 'constraining John to put his own testimony into writing while Valentinus and Cerinthus and Ebion and others of the school of Satan were scattered throughout the world,' he expressed in a picturesque but inaccurate manner a significant aspect of the Fourth Gospel. Valentinus comes into view in Egypt during the reign of Hadrian, probably nearer its end (138 A.D.) than its beginning, too late, therefore, to evoke the narrative of the Evangelist. His teaching, however, was so far in sympathy with it that his disciple Heracleon wrote the earliest commentary upon it, while another disciple, Theodotus, undertook to explain the purpose of the *gnosis* and set forth 'who we were, what we have become, where we were, whither we have been flung, whither we hasten, whence we are redeemed, what is birth and what is re-birth.' Behind the group led by Valentinus who spread East and West from Asia Minor to the Rhone Valley, stood Basilides, who made his home in Alexandria after studying at Antioch, the brilliant capital of Syria, under Menander of Kapparatea in Samaria. Menander, in his turn, had been a disciple of Simon Magus, to whom the beginnings of heresy were afterwards attributed. As teachers thus passed from one country to another to propagate their doctrines and win fresh hearers, Cerinthus, whom Victorinus wedges between Valentinus and the mythical Ebion, arrived at Ephesus like Apollos before him from Alexandria. Jew first, whether by race or conversion is unknown, he had adopted a Christianity including a singular mixture of ideas. He was an ardent

[1] Cp. on Rev. ii. 6, 15, 20, *ante*, p. 78 f.

supporter of Judeo-Christian teaching concerning the Last Things, but on the other hand he followed the Gnostic method of ascribing the creation of the world to some power beneath the supreme God, who was thus raised above the sphere of change and pain. Christ must, in the same way, have been exempt from all liability to suffering. Jesus was born of human parents, but after his baptism the Christ descended on to him in the form of a dove, and remained with him through his ministry when his function was to proclaim the Father. But the Christ, as a spiritual being, could not be crucified, and Jesus was left by himself to endure it alone. The motive was the same as that which led Buddhist disciples hundreds of years before to maintain that their Exalted Teacher had never been born on earth or left the heaven of Delight. He had only visited this world in a shape uniquely created, and this had been specially endowed with power to declare the Truth. Cerinthus thus made the purpose of revelation prominent. It did not save him from opposition. Polycarp used to tell how John ' the disciple of the Lord,' perceiving Cerinthus on entering the baths, rushed out unbathed, fearing lest the building should fall as the enemy of the truth was within.[1] There were other forms of Docetism, and the Johannine letters identify the denial that Jesus is come in the flesh with the work of Antichrist (1, iv. 3 ; 2, 7), the Spirit of Error opposing the Spirit of Truth. This was the heresy which Ignatius denounced so fiercely on his way from Antioch. Its advocates are no better than wild beasts or ravening dogs which bite secretly. The faithful must be warned at Ephesus (vii. 1), and elaborately exhorted at Smyrna (i.-v.), to preserve the faith unimpaired. A little later Polycarp must in his turn pass on the message from Smyrna to Philippi,—' Every one who does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is an Antichrist,' and we hear the first tones of the Elder's voice caught up, it would seem, from the neighbouring city.[2] Opposed to the false knowledge of the Gnostics stands the Johannine ' truth,'

[1] *Iren.* iii. 3, 4. A similar story was told about ' Ebion.'

[2] Cp. *ante*, p. 207.

prominent alike in the Gospel and in the Letters.[1] The term *Gnosis* is avoided like the term *pistis* ('faith'),[2] but the corresponding verb 'to know' is extraordinarily frequent.[3] It denotes the mutual knowledge of the Father and the Son; the Son's knowledge of whence he came and whither he is going, a knowledge denied to the Jews; his knowledge of those who have been given him as his own, and their knowledge of him in return; the believer's knowledge of the truth which frees from sin; and finally the knowledge of the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent. And this knowledge is communicated in the form of a narrative of the words and deeds of Jesus as 'the Messiah, the Son of God' (xx. 31).

NOTE TO LECTURE II

Johannine Christianity and the Mandaeans

A few words must be added concerning a daring suggestion recently published by the distinguished New Testament scholar, Prof. Bultmann of Marburg, in the *Zeitschrift für Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 1925, Heft 1-2.

Attention was drawn more than a generation ago to the religious literature of a small Oriental sect in South Babylonia, known as Mandaeans. Their name is derived from *Manda* or *gnosis*, and they are the surviving representatives of the wide-spread Gnostic movement of the second century. They came into view nearly three hundred years ago through the labours of Roman Catholic missionaries, but their beliefs and usages only began to excite serious interest after the publication of Brandt's work, *Mandäische Schriften*, in 1893. It was discovered that they possess a large collection of Scriptures, of which the oldest existing specimen is a manuscript in the Bodleian, dated 1529. Its contents are, of course, of much greater antiquity. They go back to scattered tractates which are believed to have been first combined

[1] In the Gospel some 25 times by Jesus or about him, and 18 times of his teaching in the Letters.

[2] Only in 1 John v. 4. [3] In the Gospel about 46; 1 John, 24.

into larger works after the foundation of Islam. One book received the name of John; and the principal collection of liturgical documents under the title of 'the Treasure' was named after Adam. Through the translations of Prof. Lidzbarski (the *John-book*, 1915; *Mandaean Liturgies*, 1920) they are becoming accessible to Western students. The contents are obviously of different dates. In a remarkable essay (*Das Mandäische Buch des Herrn der Grösse und die Evangelien-tradition*, 1919) Prof. Reitzenstein has extracted an early Apocalypse, which he dates before the fall of Jerusalem in 70. Here, also, are æons of Gnostic type, a world of personifications founded on conceptions of Primal Life and Light, the mission of a heavenly being, the 'Son of the First Great Life,' who is entrusted with power over everything. He brings life and can impart it, light and he can reveal it. But when he calls, men often will not listen; the light is shown them, but they will not see it. Amid a strange medley of elements, Jewish, Chaldean, Persian, the parallels with Johannine language are often in a high degree surprising, and they have been already freely cited in the recent commentary of Prof. Walter Bauer (1925).[1]

What explanation is offered of such apparent relation? The prominence given in the Mandaean texts to the River Jordan, the rite of Baptism, and the name of John, has led to the surmise that the sect really originated in the district east of the Jordan, and may be traced back to the disciples of John the Baptist. Their influence may be noted in the Odes of Solomon, and these poems though earlier in form than the Mandaean books are declared to be later in substance. Here may possibly be found some indications of sources for Johannine teaching. In such passages as John v. 27 and xii. 31 Prof. Bultmann discerns clear signs of earlier speculation, and in xii. 23-36 he sees dependence on an earlier document. In an essay published in 1923[2] he had conjectured that the Prologue

[1] In the *Quest* for January and April, 1926, the Editor has translated the series collected by Prof. Bultmann in the article cited above.

[2] In a collection called *Eucharisterion*, offered to Prof. Gunkel, *Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur*, neue Folge, 19 Heft, 2 Teil.

was really adapted from an exposition of the function of John the Baptist. That there was a rivalry between the disciples of John and the followers of Jesus the Gospel itself tells us. Jesus, it is supposed, had first attached himself to John, and John's teaching was of the type represented in the Mandaean books, where so many other elements, cosmological and anthropological, also meet. Emerging from this connexion to lead a movement of his own, the original language of Jesus (it is suggested) resembled rather that of the Baptist, and belonged to a more primitive stratum of Christianity. Johannine Christianity, in its first form, was really older than the Synoptic. It is true that the Fourth Gospel rests on the literary type created by Mark, and further shows the specific influence of Hellenistic ideas. Its origin is conjecturally placed in the variety of movements in Syria. But the preaching of the Jesus of history was much nearer to the Gnostic Baptist movement out of which the Fourth Gospel is to be understood than is recognised in Synoptic tradition. The Jerusalem community represents a secondary development produced by Judaising reaction, probably due to Peter. These are startling novelties. Students will wait till the Mandaean texts have been completely translated, and their contents thoroughly sifted. Such hypotheses will need a very firm basis. At present these speculations have only been flung out into the air.

LECTURE III

THE PROLOGUE

The Fourth Gospel is now entered through the Prologue, a portico to the sanctuary within. Unlike the preface to the Gospel of Luke it makes no claim for its narrative as based on special investigation, nor does it address a particular reader for the purpose of his instruction. Rather has it the character of a lyrical meditation, founded upon a lofty philosophical theme, applied to the person of Jesus Christ. Its brief pregnant sentences rest on a basis of common thought just as the language of a hymn rests on ideas universally accepted and consequently needing no explanation. Whether it provided the real key to the character depicted in the scenes that follow, we can the better estimate when we have briefly studied the Gospel presentation of its central figure, and its relation to the conception thus provided for its interpretation. It must be sufficient to observe now that among recent English students Prof. Stanton and Dr. Garvie on different grounds find reason for believing that it did not belong to the original contents of the Johannine teaching.[1] It was prefixed after the completion of the record to commend it to Greek readers by presenting the Hebrew Christ in terms of Hellenic thought. Prof. Burney, on the other hand, viewed it as a hymn in honour of the Word, originally composed in Aramaic by the author of the rest of the book, who drew his inspiration entirely from the Rabbis of Palestine. How was it that two such different streams

[1] Cp. J. E. C., *The Bible in the Nineteenth Century* (1903), pp. 418, 429.

of religious culture, one derived from the Jewish Scriptures, the other from the wide-spread Stoic schools, can each be offered as the source of the conception which has ever since played so large a part in the theology of the Church? What was their relation, how far had they really the same meaning? To display their affinities and differences fully would need a lengthy treatise; only brief clues to the diversities of critical opinion can be offered here.

I

The author of the story of the creation at the opening of the book of Genesis depicted it as a majestic rhythm of speech and act. God had but to command, and the world, in process of being fabricated, instantly obeyed. God said, 'Let light be,' and light was. Utterance was itself power; will flowed forth in speech; the divine words carried compelling force. This was the idea of Oriental sovereignty; 'He spake, and it was done.' All through the later Hebrew literature this note of the mystery of might resounds. 'By the word of the Lord were the heavens made,' sang the Psalmist (xxxiii. 6), and the vocal significance was emphasized by the addition 'and all their host by the breath of his mouth.' The Wisdom-teacher of Palestine carried the idea forward into the present with the declaration, 'By the word of the Lord are his works,' [1] and the Apocalyptists could only repeat the ancient phrase:

> 'O Lord,' said Ezra, 'of a truth thou didst speak at the beginning of the creation on the first day, saying, Let heaven and earth be made, and thy word perfected the work.'
>
> 'When of old there was no world with its inhabitants, thou didst devise and speak with a word, and forthwith the works of creation stood before thee.' [2]

Out of such use, it would seem, came the employment of a special term *Me'mra* or 'Word' (derived from the

[1] Ecclus. xlii. 15 (Hebrew). All implications of labour or effort were thus avoided, *Midr. Rabba* (tr. Wünsche), iii. p. 11.

[2] 4 Ezra, vi. 38 (Box); Baruch xiv. 17 (Charles).

verb ' to say ') to denote the presence and activity of the divine Being. It appears in the paraphrases of the ancient books employed in the synagogue known as Targums, the oldest of which (under the name of Onkelos) was reduced to writing probably in the second century of our era in the Rabbinical schools in Palestine. The irregularity of its occurrence renders it very difficult to determine the purpose of its use. The usual explanations that it was employed to avoid the anthropomorphic expressions of the divine action are hardly adequate when it is pointed out that it does not occur (in Onkelos) till Gen. iii. 8, ' they heard the voice of Yahweh's Memra.' [1] It is, moreover, uncertain at what time it came into use, and it has even been hinted that it might be a reflection in Palestine of the Alexandrian Jewish use of the Greek *Logos*. But so little did it represent any independent principle in the Deity that in the cognate form *Ma'amara* it could be multiplied ten-fold to match the ten repetitions of the phrase ' and God said ' in Gen. i.[2] Later on it became the characteristic term to express the divine action in the different phases of Israel's history. There were other modes of indicating his wondrous might like the *Gebhurah* or ' Power,' the *Shekhinah* or indwelling Presence, the *Yekara* or Glory. But the Word represented the double energy of thought and speech. It expressed the inmost union of purpose and will, and provided a mode in which God could communicate himself to his people, and at the same time sustain the universe. The waters above the firmament of heaven, it was said in the Midrash or traditional exposition of Genesis, were held in suspense by the creative Memra.[3] The meaning is there carried beyond productive utterance, and verges on continuous activity. But though it was thus immanent in the world, it never became incarnate in humanity, still less in any specific person.

[1] Strack-Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum N.T.* ii. (1924) p. 305. See the whole excursus with its wealth of illustration, pp. 302-333. Cp. Abelson, *The Immanence of God in Rabbinical Literature* (1912), chap. xiii.

[2] *Aboth*, v. 1 (Taylor).

[3] Par. iv., tr. Wünsche, p. 15.

A similar desire to explain the method of the divine government of the world without involving God in too close contact with actual matter, while he yet mingled in human experience and provided the forms of government, led to the expansion of primitive Hebrew philosophy under the name of Wisdom. Early meditation on the conduct of life expressed itself in proverb and fable; it embraced the sagacity of the man of affairs which made Solomon excel all the children of the East, and the higher religious view which would win for Israel by its obedience to the divine commands the repute of a wise and understanding people. Out of later intercourse with foreign nations Wisdom gradually acquired a loftier character and a half-defined personality. Dim forms of more or less cognate character loom out of the mythologies of Egypt, Babylon, and Persia. Over against Madam Folly and her temptations (Prov. ix. 13-18) rose the noble figure of the Lady Wisdom, standing at the entry of the city and appealing to the passer-by, or sending forth her maidens with invitations to the banquet in her seven-pillared house (viii, ix. 1 ff.). There Wisdom (which is feminine in Hebrew as in the Greek *Sophia*) is at once the organising energy of the universe, the intellectual principle of the visible world, and the bond of the whole social order, the unseen power by which kings reign, the rule by which princes decree justice. She is the splendid impersonation of the divine purpose, formed in the beginning of God's way, at his entry on the great process of creation. As act follows act she is ever at his side as his ward, sporting in his presence continually with the joy of production.[1] With the advance of the Wisdom literature the personification acquires more imaginative force. The Son of Sirach depicts her as created by the Lord, before all things, and poured out upon all his works

[1] On the meaning of the unique word rendered 'ward,' see Prof. Crawford Toy (in the *I.C.C.*) on the passage, viii. 30, 31. Bousset thought that the appearance of this beautiful figure might have been due to Persian influence through Armaiti, one of the Holy Immortals (*ante*, p. 16), identified by Plutarch with the Greek Sophia; but this is decidedly rejected by Ed. Meyer, *Ursprung and Anfänge des Christenthums*, ii. (1921) p. 105 [2].

(Ecclus. i. 4, 9). In stately language she describes her two-fold function in the universe and humanity (xxiv. 3 ff.) :

I came forth from the mouth of the Most High,
And covered the earth as a mist.
I dwelt in high places,
And my throne is in a pillar of cloud.
Alone I compassed the circuit of heaven,
And walked in the depth of the abyss.
In the waves of the sea, and in all the earth,
And in every people and nation I got a possession.

But finally her Creator gave her a commandment, ' Let thy tabernacle be in Jacob ' (ver. 8). So she ministered in the holy Tabernacle and was established in Zion, and finally was—not enfleshed in the Priesthood but (so to speak) embooked in the Law : ' All these things are the Book of the Covenant of the Most High God ' (ver. 23). Under the influences of neighbouring cultures to which Israel again and again responded in the long course of her history—in this case probably of Persia and Greece—there arose a conception of an ideal Law or Torah, pre-existent in the mind of God or ever the heavens and the earth were made.[1] By the curious methods of Rabbinical treatment of Scripture the term *rêshîth* (Prov. viii. 22) applied to Wisdom ' in the beginning ' (or ' the first ') was identified with the first word of Genesis which was then understood to mean ' by Wisdom,' and the identification of Wisdom with the Law led to the doctrine that before beginning to create God first looked into the heavenly Torah, which contained the ideal types and relations of all future existences. So the exposition ran as follows :

The Torah said, ' I was the instrument of God.' If a king builds a palace, he does not build it after his own design but according to the design of an architect, and even he does not build according to his own pleasure, but he has parchments and tablets on which the disposition of the halls and chambers is set out. In the same way God looked into the Torah and

[1] On other ideal counterparts cp. p. 90. For the following passage from the Midrash on Genesis, see Wünsche's translation, p. 1.

created the world and the Torah says ' By Rêshîth,' by which is to be understood that by nothing else than the Torah did God create the world.[1]

Along another line of thought Wisdom received a fresh function. The poet might, indeed, represent her as having gone forth from heaven to make her dwelling among the children of men and returning to her seat among the angels having found no place on earth. But in the days of the Son of Man who had been chosen and hidden before the Lord of Spirits before the creation of the world, the fountains of wisdom would be opened to the thirsty and the spirit of wisdom would dwell in him.[2] Such was the apocalyptic promise. The Alexandrian theology carried the Palestinian conception into more exalted heights. She was not only the instrument of God's creation, who made all things by his Word or Reason (*logos*) and by his wisdom formed man ; she is a constant energy, swifter than any motion, so pure that she can pervade everything, the spotless mirror of God's working, an effulgence from everlasting light. From end to end does she reach with full strength, and she orders all things graciously.[3] The author of *Wisdom* is in close touch with Greek philosophy, and the figure which he presents is more than the intellectual instrument of divine creation ; she is an actual cosmic force, perpetually upholding the universe, directing and executing all its changes, and providentially guiding the vicissitudes of Israel's history. As she had been identified with the Messiah, it was natural that the Apostle Paul should see in him the manifestation of the wondrous attributes of God, his Power and Wisdom (as in Job xii. 13). These are no more to be interpreted as independent ' hypostases ' than the righteousness, sanctification and redemption, which are immediately after linked with God's wisdom as

[1] Cp. the use of the same figure by Philo in the tract *On Creation*, iv., below, p. 300, to illustrate the distinction between the ideals in the divine mind, and the objects apprehended by our senses. In John i. 1 the words may have carried a hint of this application.

[2] Enoch xlii, xlviii, xlix.

[3] Wisdom of Solomon ix. 1, 2 ; vii. 22-viii. 1.

the possession of believers in the fellowship of Christ (1 Cor. i. 24, 30). To this lofty ideal type the Greek Fathers appealed again and again to justify Christ's pre-existence,[1] though its position might not be exactly defined. Justin, for example, whose acquaintance with the Fourth Gospel is still disputed by eminent scholars, combines it with another term of high significance, 'the Word of Wisdom, who is himself this God begotten of the Father of all things.' Here is the *Logos* of the Johannine Prologue. Whence did it pass into this scheme of thought? And what was its relation to Wisdom?

II

It is well known that the term had entered the field of philosophical language some five hundred years before our era, and subsequently attained a wide use. First employed at Ephesus itself by Herakleitus, designated the 'Dark' or the 'Obscure,' it had been passed from one teacher to another, and applied in various ways. Herakleitus himself had apparently employed it to describe 'a unity, omnipresent, rational and divine, the guiding and controlling cause of everything that comes to pass whether by the agency of man or of nature.'[2] It is more than simple reason, for it is universal; and it is more than thought, for it exercises power, and presides over the incessant changes in the eternal world. As such it is equivalent to that Wisdom of which it is twice declared that there is but one. It consists 'in knowing the thought by which all things are steered through all things,' and 'it wills not and yet wills to be called by the name of

[1] Cp. Dr. Rendel Harris, *The Origin of the Prologue to St. John's Gospel* (1917), p. 14 ff. Dr. Harris suggests that the Prologue was founded on a hymn in praise of Wisdom, which was afterwards adapted to the conception of the Logos and his incarnation in Jesus. He works out a possible restoration of the Prologue to its prior form (p. 43), and this view leads to the result that it need not be in that sense due to the same authorship as the Gospel itself (p. 6). Cp. Lect. IV, p. 333 ff.

[2] See the essay on 'The Logos of Heraclitus' in the volume entitled *The Vitality of Platonism* (1911) by the late James Adam, p. 91, in opposition to the view of Prof. Burnet, *Early Greek Philosophy* [2] (1908), p. 146.

Zeus.' That name covered degrading attributes in the poets which true Wisdom could not associate with the mighty cause of the universe, for ' to God all things are fair and good and right.' [1] Before a century had passed the ' divine Logos ' was saluted as the source whence human reason drew its being,[2] and the way was opened for the Stoic Cleanthes to sing of ' the Universal Word that flows through all.' [3]

' O King of Kings
Through ceaseless ages, God, whose purpose brings
To birth, whate'er on land or in the sea
Is wrought, or in high heaven's immensity ;
Save what the sinner works infatuate.
Nay, but thou knowest to make crooked straight :
Chaos to thee is order ; in thine eyes
The unloved is lovely, who didst harmonise
Things evil with things good, that there should be
One Word through all things everlastingly.'

When the cultivated Jew of Alexandria entered on the study of philosophy under Greek teachers, he found himself encountering the problems of existence in a new atmosphere of thought. The fundamental antithesis of Hellenic speculation was not that which besets the enquirer to-day between the conscious subject and the object of his perception with the questions, ' How do I know, what am I, and what is knowledge ? ' The contemplative intellect, meditating on the infinite variety of the scene around, sought to reduce its multiplicity to some principle of unity. Primitive Ionian science might seek the origin of things in water or air or fire, in fluid or gaseous states, or in heat ; a step further revealed the distinction between that which for ever is and that which arises in the field of our experience, plays its part

[1] Fragments 19, 65, 61, tr. Burnet.

[2] See the fragment (Adam, p. 95) formerly attributed by Diels and others to the Sicilian poet Epicharmus (about 550-460 B.C.). Kaibel, while treating the lines as of uncertain authorship, maintains that they date from the fifth century and were known to Euripides. Adam discerns in them ' the most explicit statement of the Logos doctrine to be found between the time of Heraclitus and that of the Stoics.'

[3] See the fine rendering of the famous Hymn of Cleanthes (born probably in 331 B.C. at Assos in Asia Minor) by Adam, *op. cit.* p. 105.

in the series of events, and disappears. Herakleitus had conceived of the world around him as a process of perpetual change under a rule of Law to which he gave the name of Logos. Anaxagoras of Clazomenae (near Smyrna) carried on the succession of thinkers in the Eastern Mediterranean by interpreting the ultimate reality as Mind (*Nous*). Subsequent generations sought to reach a coherent explanation of the universe conceived as a manifestation of Intelligence or Reason. While the Jew was concerned with tracing the divine action in the course of history, and fixed his gaze on the fortunes of his people, the Greek found the witness of Deity in the cosmic order. The prophet, surveying the march of stars at night, might declare that there was no searching of his understanding, but he knew for what Israel had been chosen and looked forward to the completion of God's purpose with unfaltering trust. Plato, on the other hand, was driven to confess that 'the Father and Maker of all this world is past finding out, and even if we found him to tell of him to all men would be impossible.' But he argued that since the world is the fairest of creations, and God is the best of causes, it has been framed 'in the likeness of that which has been apprehended by Reason and Mind and is unchangeable.' [1] Above the objects of sense there was a realm of ideas where truth and beauty and goodness dwelt unchequered by decay. It was the sphere of the unseen and abiding, which could be perceived only by the mind. In later days it found its symbol in light. This contrast between the passing and the permanent, the temporal and the eternal (2 Cor. iv. 18, the Apostle platonises), provided a constant theme for discussion. How were they related? By what agency do the varied phenomena that fill our view follow each other along the stream of time? What explanation could be given of the connexion between the daily incidents of motion and succession and the intellectual conceptions in which the mind saw their true significance?

When Philo (whose long life included that of Jesus) took up such questions at Alexandria, he had a varied

[1] *Timaeus*, p. 28 f. Jowett[3], iii. p. 449.

philosophical literature behind him. His object was apparently two-fold. He sought to teach his countrymen the religious significance of Hellenic thought, and to commend the Hebrew Scriptures to the attention of the Greek. His fundamental conceptions like his vocabulary were essentially Platonic, but his technical instrument was the Logos which had become central in the Stoic schools as the chief term in their pantheistic interpretation of the world and man. It gained its value in application to the sublime apprehension of God as 'inhabiting eternity'; the Greek in Philo could not add 'with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit.' Above all vicissitude, the source of ceaseless activity, he dwelt unmoved. Pure Being, 'the Essential Essence' (if we may so render the august abstraction τὸ ὄντως ὄν), he could have no contact with the weak and finite elements of our nature any more than with the mutations of the universe. His secret name, 'I am that I am,' denoted simple existence. No other could be given him, for every name implied some limitation, and put him in a class with other beings. But he is Absolute, timeless, immutable. For our minds he is beyond all comprehension, except as to his existence. Of the modes of his being we can frame no idea. Beyond the fact we can tell nothing.[1] Straining after the utmost heights of philosophical refinement towards 'the Fair and Good,' Philo dared to describe him as 'Higher than the Unity,' 'the Monad,' and 'the One.'

The thinker's difficulty was to connect God thus presented as the loftiest object of religious contemplation with the actual scene of our daily life. Scripture provided Philo with various groups of intermediate beings, heavenly messengers or angels, which could be set between the Platonic 'ideas,' or the 'powers' in which Stoic speculation saw the ruling and administrative forces of the world. For Philo these 'powers' had a two-fold character. On their immaterial side they were divine thoughts; in their cosmic aspect they were physical energies, not merely types of things to be created, but

[1] *The Unchangeableness of God*, xiii. Cohn-Wendland, ii. p. 70, § 62.

actually operating causes. Through them God worked upon the world of our senses which he did not enter directly. They were his ministers (literally 'subdeacons'), his 'lieutenant-governors,' the agents of his providential sovereignty. They inhered in 'the First God' as inseparable potencies, and could be picturesquely portrayed by Hebrew imagination as angels, or by Greek as the spirits whose home (according to ancient poetical belief) was in the atmosphere. But for Philo one term found shelter for them all, and bound them into one inclusive unity. The world, and all that it contained, viewed as a single comprehensive whole, the sum of all its parts and relations implicit as well as explicit, was God's *Logos*.

The attempt to combine two sources so unlike as the books of Moses and the teachings of Greek metaphysics necessarily led to many confusions of language. The minds trained in such different modes of thought seemed to move on different planes, and in trying to pass from one to the other Philo's utterance is often uncertain and elusive. Sometimes the Logos appears to be the abstract divine thinking, sometimes the positive contents of the immanent reason, the actual objects of the divine mind, the sum of all the relations embraced by the divine thought. Like his brethren in Palestine he uses the figure of an architect and his plan, but on a grander scale.[1] Summoned by a sovereign or powerful leader, full of imagination, to lay out a city, he first of all studies the situations and sketches out in his own mind the grouping of the several buildings, -the temples, the gymnasia, the public offices, the markets, harbour, docks, streets, walls, dwelling-houses,—and forms an image of the city which his intellect only can apprehend. Similarly the whole universe was thus present to the mind of God with all its parts and powers, and the Mosaic record of the creation of the heaven and the earth described the ideal types of sky and land and sea with all their multitudinous contents before the actual ground was ready out of which the first man could be formed. Such was the Logos, conceived within the mind of God. The language in

[1] *On Creation*, iv. Cohn-Wendland, i. p. 5, § 17.

which it is described, the epithets conferred upon it, leave it doubtful how far Philo really regarded it as a distinct conscious agency. He does not speculate upon its origin or explain the process by which it came to be. But he gives it titles which imply that once brought into being the Logos possessed some kind of personality. Like the pre-existent Christ as St. Paul envisaged him, he was God's First-born Son, placed in charge of the sacred company of sun, moon, and stars.[1] He was thus neither self-existent, infinite, unbegotten, eternal, like God himself, nor finite and created like us. He was, indeed, divine, *theos* in the wide indefinite sense. He might even be designated 'second God' in comparison with the Absolute, 'the First God'; but he is never called *ho theos* (with the definite article), a distinction which we shall soon observe in the first verse of the Johannine Prologue. On the other hand, he is the fountain of life for the world, the seal impressed on indeterminate matter by the divine thought, the instrument of creation, the ray of the divine sun, or more personally the Demiurge or Artificer, at once the image, the shadow, and the glory of God. Philo was not a systematic thinker; he uses the freedom of a poet, and can employ the symbols of mythology when it pleases him though it leads him into a strange group of family relations. Applying the figure of birth to describe causation or production, he not only discerns in the Logos God's First-born Son, but beside him he places a younger son, the world. And inasmuch as the world in its turn becomes the father of Time, Philo does not shrink from describing this new issue from the motions of the spheres as God's Grandson.[2] In this imaginative series a mother is found in Wisdom, to whose virginity Deity plays the part of husband (Jerem. iii. 4),[3] so that 'when the day of her travail arrived, she brought forth her only and beloved Son, viz. this world of our sense-experience.'[4]

[1] *On Noah's Tillage*, xii. Cohn-Wendland, ii. p. 106, § 51.

[2] *On God's Immutability*, vi. Cohn-Wendland, ii. p. 63, § 31.

[3] *On Cherubim*, xiv. Cohn-Wendland, i. p. 182, § 49.

[4] *On Drunkenness*, viii. Cohn-Wendland, ii. p. 176, § 30. Wisdom is here identified with the divine 'knowledge' (*epistêmê*).

There are other relationships in which Wisdom has a share, for she is the spring whence the divine Logos flows forth like a river;[1] but so little is this order securely established that it can be inverted, and the Logos is then presented as the fountain of Wisdom.[2] Yet in the same tractate the high-priest is explained allegorically as the Logos, God being his Father and Wisdom his Mother, and on a third appearance Wisdom is designated God's Daughter.[3] In God Wisdom is the archetypal light of which the sun is the visible image, and is thus practically identical with the Logos.[4] What, then, is the position of Man in this scheme of spiritual agencies? The Stoic pantheism had linked the human spirit to the divine so closely that the poet Menander did not shrink from saying 'Our mind (*nous*) is God.'[5] More guardedly did Philo affirm that the two natures—the reasoning power within us and the divine Word above us—are indivisible. The essential unity of thought could not be severed. Every man, therefore, while belonging to the material world by his bodily organisation, was related by his intellect to divine Reason (*logos*), being an impression or fragment or effulgence (Heb. i. 3, Philo has various metaphors) of its blessed nature. It is in virtue of this intrinsic union that in the field of human history he can appear as God's Ambassador, his Interpreter, the Eldest Messenger or Angel. Divine revelation is possible because he is its medium. As the agent of Providence he is Israel's guide, and he is the unfailing helper and protector of those who are inclined to virtue. So to those who have real knowledge of the one Creator and Father of all things the language of Deuteronomy (xiv. 1), 'Ye are the sons of the Lord God,' may be fittingly applied. And 'even if we are not yet fit to be called the sons of God, we may still

[1] *On Dreams*, II. xxxvii. Cohn-Wendland, iii. p. 297, § 242.

[2] *On Flight*, xviii. Cohn-Wendland, iii. p. 131, § 97.

[3] *Ibid.* xx., ix. *Ibid.* p. 133, § 109; p. 121, § 51. Cp. the Rabbinic designation of the Torah as God's daughter, Strack-Billerbeck, *Comm.* ii. p. 356.

[4] *On the Migration of Abraham*, viii. Cohn-Wendland, ii. p. 276, § 40.

[5] Plutarch, *Platonic Questions*, i.

deserve to be called the sons of his immaterial image, his most sacred Logos; for the most ancient Logos is God's image.' [1] And on behalf of man the Logos represents the world before God. He is its Suppliant, its Paraclete, Helper or Advocate, symbolised by the heroes of ancient story such as Melchizedek or Moses, but never personally identified with any of them. The Logos was thus a term in current Hellenistic Jewish theology as well as in the philosophical schools of Greece. It had also been already applied in the attempt to bring the gods of popular worship into some real connexion with higher religious thought and life, and commend them to serious minds.

III

Of this endeavour the most conspicuous instance is connected with the name of Hermes, to whom the epithet Trismegistus or 'Thrice Great' was attached in the second century of our era.[2] In the year 1471 the Italian scholar Marsilio Ficino published at Treviso near Venice a Latin translation of a group of fourteen tractates in Greek ascribed to Hermes (Mercury) Trismegistus. He was represented as the founder of theology, who lived about the time of Moses, and his teaching, transmitted through Orpheus and other successors, was completed by Plato. The book went through eight editions before 1500, but the Greek text was not edited till 1554, when three more tractates were added. More editions followed, both in Greek and Latin, and an English translation by Dr. Everard was issued in 1650. The importance of the documents only secured partial recognition in the last century, but in the treatise entitled *Poimandres* (1904) Prof. Reitzenstein of Strasburg opened new and fruitful lines of investigation, and the monumental edition by the late Prof. Walter Scott has placed a wealth of material in

[1] *On the Confusion of Languages*, xxviii. Cohn-Wendland, ii. p. 257, §. 147.

[2] It is said to be the equivalent of the Egyptian epithet 'great, great' (Greek 'great and great') on the Rosetta Stone, understood as a superlative. Cp. Pietschmann, *Hermes Trismeg.*, p. 31.

the student's hands.[1] To the *libelli* of the so-called Corpus Hermeticum Prof. Scott has added the Latin *Asclepius*, often attributed by the Renaissance scholars to Apuleius, and the Hermetic extracts in the 'Anthology' of John Stobæus (of Stoboi in Macedonia) in the fifth century A.D. Here is the varied product—probably extending over more than one century—of a series of writers unknown by name, attached to no locality, sometimes contradicting each other in detail, but sharing more or less a common view of God, the world, and human nature, presented under the name of Hermes the Thrice-Greatest. To the circumstances of their origin we have no clue. Two of the tractates are quoted by Lactantius early in the fourth century, writing (apparently in Africa) in defence of Christianity. Prof. Scott places *Lib.* xviii. within a year or two of A.D. 300, and finds no reason to think that any other of the tractates are of later date. But if that is the lower limit, how far back may we carry any of the doctrines of the peculiar blend of philosophy and mysticism which these documents exhibit, and why should it be associated with an exalted conception of Hermes?

The son of Zeus and Maia who serves as messenger from heaven in the Greek epic had already attained a loftier status in Plato's day than the wily deity whose exploit immediately after birth in stealing Apollo's kine is celebrated with such gusto in the Homeric Hymns. His popular character still clings to him when Plato remarks in the *Cratylus* (p. 408) that 'the name has to do with speech, and signifies that he is the interpreter (ἑρμηνεύς) or messenger, or thief, or liar,—all that sort of thing has a great deal to do with language.' But Plato moralises him nobly, and after tracing the early history of man, in process of destruction through evilly entreating each other,

[1] English readers may be glad also to consult the three volumes of Mr. G. R. S. Mead under the title *Thrice Greatest Hermes* (1906), though his conclusions may not win assent. Prof. Scott's work is the result of many years of patient and devoted labour, founded on ample learning, but his reconstruction of the text will sometimes appear too bold. Unhappily his sudden death after the publication of his first volume has deprived us of any reply to possible criticisms.

assigns to him a function like that of the Hebrew Wisdom. Zeus, he relates, 'sent Hermes to them bearing reverence and justice to be the ordering principles of cities and the bonds of friendship and conciliation.'[1] Learned Christians like Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian at the end of the second century both laid stress on Plato's indebtedness to Egypt, and Tertullian especially emphasized his respect for the Egyptian Hermes.[2] This was the God Thoth, whom Plato credits under the name of Theuth with the invention of many arts, arithmetic and geometry, astronomy, draughts, dice, and letters (*Phaedrus*, p. 274). Dr. Budge describes him as 'the personification of the whole company of the gods.' He was the One who counted the stars and measured the earth. In another theological scheme he was both the Heart and Tongue of the supreme sun-god Rê. He was at once the Reason or Mind of the God, and the agency of the translation of Thought into Speech; in one aspect, indeed, he was Speech itself; 'he spoke the Word and caused the universe to come into being.' He was thus the impersonation of the Immanent Intelligence in the world and human life. The character of Thoth, we are told, 'is a lofty and beautiful conception, and is perhaps the highest idea of Deity ever fashioned in the Egyptian mind.'[3] A large literature of science and worship was extant under his name in the second century, and is described by Clement. In forty-two books it dealt with many themes. On the one side it was concerned with astronomy and astrology, geography and the land of Egypt, the structure of the body and the practice of medicine. In ten books ritual duties of sacrifices, prayers, processions, were expounded. Ten more were devoted to law, theology, and the training of priests. There was a book of hymns, and another containing regulations for the king's life. These were the official documents of Thoth religion, presumably in the

[1] *Protagoras*, p. 322; Jowett, i. p. 143. Similarly in the *Laws*, xii. p. 941, a herald or ambassador who falsifies a message is to be indicted for violating the commands of Hermes and Zeus. Cp. the identification of Barnabas and Paul with Zeus and Hermes, Acts xiv. 12.

[2] Clem. Alex. *Strom.* i. chap. 15; Tert. *De Anima*, ii.

[3] *Gods of Egypt*, i. pp. 150, 400, 407, 415, 421.

Egyptian language.[1] Is it impossible that there may have been other kinds of teaching in the name of Hermes outside the temples arising out of contact with Greek thought? The mutual reaction of Hellenic philosophy and Egyptian theosophy upon each other cannot be precisely measured. It might take one form in the cultus of Isis and another in that of Thoth-Hermes. But that it was going on for two or three centuries before our era can hardly be doubted.[2] Already under its influence Thoth had become 'great great,' in a decree of the priests of Memphis in the reign of Ptolemy V Epiphanes ('God manifest,' 196 B.C.).[3] On the Greek side he was designated Evangelos, 'bringer of good tidings.' The Orphic poets sang of him as the 'Interpreter of all things'; they called him the Messenger ('angel') of Zeus. Dear to mortals in distress he was to them 'prophet of Logos' (reason or speech).[4]

It was the Stoics, however, who most definitely exhibited him as an object of religion They had (as we have seen) worked out a conception of the Logos as the principle of indwelling Reason in the world and man. Tertullian appeals to Zeno and Cleanthes in support of the Christian doctrine 'that the Logos, that is the Word and Reason—is the Creator of the world.'[5] In the universe it might operate in various modes, and in modernising the popular theology it could be identified with different figures. The conception has a double aspect in the world and man. On the one hand it is a cosmic energy, on the other an activity of consciousness. In the physical scene it covers the element of power; in humanity it appears as ordered thought. Thus the African Cornutus, teacher of the Roman poets Persius and Lucan, writing in the reign of Nero, finds a manifestation of the Logos in Herakles as the strength and might of Nature, and again in Irênê (Peace), 'for they called the Logos Peace which effected

[1] Clem. Alex. *Strom.* vi. chap. 4.

[2] Plutarch, *De Iside*, lxi, mentions books of Hermes which give an account of the sacred names.

[3] On the Rosetta Stone, *ante*, p. 303.

[4] *Orphic Hymns*, xxviii. 4; Fragm. 160, 1. [5] Apologeticus, xxi.

a settlement by reason and not by arms.'[1] But the most striking impersonation was presented in the mythical Hermes. 'He is the reason,' says Cornutus (xvi), 'whom the Gods sent to us from heaven, as they had made man alone of all living creatures on the earth capable of reason.' He was their Messenger (*angelos*) 'inasmuch as we know their will from the clear thoughts implanted in us according to reason.' He was born to Zeus by Maia to show that Reason is the offspring of Contemplation and Enquiry.[2] The ancient epithets which described him as a god of the way-side or the guide of departed souls to Hades were interpreted of his function as a guide in all conduct and leader in the path of duty. He was the common element alike in both all men and gods.[3] Bringing him into the closest contact with daily life, Cornutus described him as the overseer or patron (*episcopos*) of those who buy and sell, since all transactions should be accomplished with right reason, and he enjoined what should be done and forbade what should not.

To this body of philosophical testimony Justin confidently appeals for recognition of the presence of the Logos in Christ. Its seed had been planted in every race of men, and those who lived with it were Christians even though like Socrates and Herakleitus among the Greeks they had been counted atheists. Turning to those who called Hermes the Messenger Logos of God, he remarks that he says nothing different about the wondrous birth and ascension of 'our Teacher' compared with their beliefs about sons of Zeus, for example, about Hermes 'the interpreting Logos and Teacher of all.'[4] Christ and Hermes are thus set over against each other in the special

[1] *De Natura Deorum*, Herakles, xxxi; Irene, xxix. She was one of the three Horæ (the Seasons), daughters of Zeus and Themis (Law).

[2] One of the numerous fanciful etymologies which had done duty as illustrative arguments since Plato's *Cratylus*. *Maia* as if from *maiomai*, to search, and so to investigate.

[3] This was a commonplace of the Stoic School. Osannus (Cornutus' editor, 1844) quotes Seneca, *Ep.* xcii. 'Ratio vero diis hominibusque communis; haec in illis consummata est, in nobis consummabilis.' Cp. Zeller, *Stoics and Epicureans*, p. 216; *Epictetus* (tr. Matheson), i. chap. 3, 'the reason (*logos*) and mind common to us with the gods.'

[4] 1 *Apol.* xlvi, xxii, xxi.

character of Teachers. Of Christ's teachings Justin quotes from the 'Memoirs of the Apostles' abundant illustrations. They are new, and must be proclaimed insistently. The body of morality in common life embodied in law and social usage may be set down to the account of the Hermetic Logos, but in Justin's emphasis there may be room also for a recognition of doctrines specially connected with his name. Such doctrines certainly come into view in the second century as they were familiar to Tertullian. Justin, who goes on to mention other 'sons of Zeus' such as Asclepius, Dionysus, Herakles, speaks from the Greek side; Tertullian cites Hermes Trismegistus, 'master of all natural philosophy.' Like Plato and the Stoics he started from an uncreated chaos. Further, he taught that the soul after death retained its distinct individuality, unabsorbed into the soul of the universe, 'in order' (to use his own words, says Tertullian) 'that it might render an account to the Father of those things which it has done in the body.'[1] These two doctrines point to a type of Platonic thought. An eternal stuff, unorganised and formless, requires a Mind, Reason, or Demiurge or 'second God,' to bring it into coherence, order, stability. And a Father who demands a reckoning from departed souls as their Creator and Judge, presides over the moral administration of the world, and possesses in his sovereign righteousness one of the loftiest attributes of Deity. From what text Tertullian was quoting he does not tell us. He calls his author the 'Egyptian Hermes.' The ideas which he cites are familiar in the schools of philosophy and the disciplines of religion, but they are presented under a divine name; in other words, they belong to a literature of Revelation. The documents which have reached us under this form are only a partial survival of a more comprehensive group. Some of them are excerpts from larger works, by various authors, and of different dates. They do not conform to a regular scheme of teaching, but they are linked together by a certain community of thought and aim; they imply acts of worship, and the ardent devotion of their hymns is

[1] *Adv. Valentin.* xv.; *De Anima,* xxxiii.

no private or solitary utterance ; it rests on a body of conviction, shared by a comprehensive fellowship. But of any groups of organised disciples (cp. i. 29) no traces survive.[1]

Divers elements of speculation, Egyptian (?), Platonic, Stoic, Jewish,[2] are blended in these discourses. The central object of contemplation is God, and the chief purpose of man is to know him. The ultimate essence of the universe is (in Platonic speech) the Good, illimitable, without beginning. It is conceived imaginatively as archetypal light. From this proceed Mind (*Nous*) and Truth like rays, and God may be defined as the cause to which Mind and Truth and all things owe their being (ii. 13). As the Creator he is again and again described as Father, and the poet sings :

> ' Thou art Mind in that thou thinkest, Father in that thou createst,
> God in that thou workest, and Good as maker of all things ' (v. 11).

It is his ' work ' to be a Father ; if he ceases to work he ceases to be God ; the cosmos never *came* into being, it is for ever coming into being ; it is God's very essence to generate movement and life in all things.[3] In such phrases God is presented as a perpetual energy, with the result that ' there is nothing which is not in God, and nothing in which God is not ' (ix. 9).

Not all the *libelli*, however, are conceived in such all-embracing pantheism. The opening discourse describes

[1] The wide diffusion of Hermetic wisdom and its high religious significance may be inferred from the statement of the Syrian Ephraim († 373) that the Manichees reckoned ' Hermes in Egypt and Plato among the Greeks and Jesus who appeared in Judea as Heralds of that Good One (Māni) to the world.' Quoted by Burkitt, *The Religion of the Manichees* (1925), p. 38. I agree with the view expounded by Miss Ely (since this chapter was written) that ' the Poimandres represents the expression of a rather long development of religious speculation, whose origin was certainly pre-Christian, but whose literary expression is probably contemporaneous with early Christianity, and perhaps partly anterior to it.' *Knowledge of God in Johannine Thought* (New York, 1925), p. 101.

[2] In reminiscences from Gen. i, but whether from acquaintance with the LXX or from hearsay cannot be determined. There is a large consensus of opinion that the writers owed nothing to Christian influence, but they may have been acquainted with Philo.

[3] v. 9 ; xi. 12b, 3, 17c.

a vision of Hermes in sleep when there came to him a Being of boundless magnitude, who revealed himself as Poimandres, the Mind of the Sovereignty.[1] The scene is vast and undefined. The world of sense vanishes, and Hermes is aware of a boundless expanse of light. It is the symbol of God, for space as incorporeal is identified with Mind (ii. 12). From the light comes forth the Logos who is designated Son of God, to Nous as Father. God, then, being Life and Light, produces the world with its seven heavens and their corresponding planetary powers, whose administration is called Destiny (a conception of the later Stoicism with an astrological background). The creation of the ideal man follows. He bears the image of his Father, but in love with Nature descends into the world of sense. It is the parallel to stories of the Fall, and leaves him with a mortal body, subject to Destiny, yet 'immortal by reason of the Man of eternal substance.' There is a way of recovery. 'He who has recognised himself has entered into that Good which is above all being; but he who has set his affection on the body continues wandering in the darkness of the sense-world, suffering the lot of death.' The pure and merciful are assisted by the advent (*parousia*) of Mind who keeps guard at the gates, barring the entrance of evil thoughts, and after death the ascended soul has gained the knowledge of the Good, enters into God, and becomes divine.

Hermes is then bidden—'having received all things'—to act as guide, that mankind may thus be saved through him by God. He bids them 'repent,' 'Rid yourselves of darkness, and lay hold of the Light.' Finally, as he realises his own attainment of the abode of Truth, he breaks out into a hymn of praise:

'Holy is God, the Father of all, who is before the first beginning;

Holy is God, who wills to be known, and is known by them that are his own.

[1] The name was commonly interpreted as Man-Shepherd or Shepherd of Men (as if from the Greek), but Prof. F. Ll. Griffith has suggested an Egyptian derivation, 'the knowledge of the Sun-god,' and this is preferred by Scott, ii. p. 16.

Holy art Thou who by thought-speech [1] hast constructed all things that are ;
Holy art Thou, of whom all Nature is an image.

. . . . . .

I pray that I may never fall away from that knowledge of thee which matches with our being : grant Thou this my prayer. And put power into me that I may enlighten those of my race who are in ignorance, my brothers and thy sons. . . . Wherefore I believe and bear witness that I enter into Life and Light.

Blessed art thou, Father, thy Man seeks to share thy holiness, even as thou hast given him all authority.' [2]

' Life and light,' ' darkness,' ' believe,' ' bear witness,' ' truth,' are all Johannine words. Yet there is a practical agreement among students of the Hermetica that they owe nothing to Christianity. But here are teachers proclaiming a path to the knowledge of God, summoning men to a new birth, even meeting the enquiry ' from what womb can a man be born again ? ' (xiii. 1), and describing the re-born as a ' son of God.' This type of devotion expressed itself in overflowing gratitude for such gifts of grace :

' For thou hast bestowed on us mind, speech, and knowledge,
Mind, that we may apprehend thee,
Speech, that we may call upon thee,
And knowledge that having come to know thee, and found salvation in thy light, we may rejoice.
We rejoice that thou hast revealed thyself in all thy being,
We rejoice that while we are yet in the body thou hast deigned to make us divine (ἀποθεῶσαι) by the gift of thine own eternity.
We can thank thee only by learning to know thy greatness.

[1] ' By *logos* ' (without article or pronoun). I owe this suggestion to Dr. P. H. Wicksteed.

[2] Scott, i. p. 131 (condensed). The word translated ' authority ' reappears in Hermes' address to men, ' Why have you given yourselves up to death, when you have been granted power to partake of immortality ? ' (§ 28). The words ' authority,' ' power ' (John i. 12, A.V.), ' right ' (R.V.), are all the same. For ' life and light ' cp. the description of the soul in which the Logos has been ' built up,' ' Truth has come, and with it the Good, with Life and Light,' xiii. 7, 9, 18.

We have learned to know thee, O thou most brightly shining light of the world of mind.
We have learned to know thee, O thou true Life of the life of man.' [1]

With some common religious terminology, and corresponding appeals to analogous phases of inner experience, the Hermetica and the Fourth Gospel appear wholly independent. Each makes its contribution to the spiritual life of its age in its own form. Each seeks the knowledge of God, and each finds it in a communion opened to the soul from the divine side by an act of grace. The Greek mystic realises it through Nature, the Christian through Christ. The reality of this communion no sympathetic student of the Hermetica will doubt.[2] The language of its gratitude is of a sincerity which cannot be disputed. None of the numerous sects established on some type of Hellenic or Christian Gnosticism has left behind it such memorials of faith and devotion.[3] The Gospel had the immeasurable advantage of founding itself on a real person. Jerusalem was a city of renown; the Jews were a privileged people; Pilate had a recognised place in Roman history. Hermes had faded into a symbol or a myth, and not even the epithet 'Thrice-Great' could galvanise him into reality. The Prophet of reason might proclaim God as 'Life and Light,' but the victory over the world lay with the 'Galilean' in whom 'the Word became flesh.'

[1] *Asclepius*, § 41b, Scott, i. p. 375. Mind=*nous*, speech=*logos*, knowledge=*gnosis*. In the Poimandres the First Mind (God), who is life and light, produces a Second Mind or Demiurge, with which the Logos is of one substance (*homo-ousios*). In some of the following discourses the Logos is reduced to speech, *e.g.* ix. 1, it is sister of thought; xii. 13, an image of Mind, as Mind is of God. Mind thus takes its place as the 'common element' between God and man. It is of God's very substance (xii. 1), and those in whom it exists may be described as 'divine,' *i.e.* immortal; but it is not conferred on all men, and its relations with the Soul (*psychê*) are obscure, as different points of view are suggested in different tractates.

[2] Thus with xiii. 14-21 cp. Wordsworth, *Prelude*, Book II. 'I felt the sentiment of Being spread,' etc.

[3] Perhaps an exception should be made in favour of the 'Hymn of the Soul'; cp. J. E. C., *Phases of Early Christianity*, p. 320.

IV

'In the beginning was the Word.' The prologue is designed to explain the nature of Christ, and prepare the reader for the presentation of his words and works in the light of his divine origin. For this purpose its author employs a conception widely used, as we have seen, in contemporary religious philosophy.[1] What follows, however, is no systematic exposition. The writer is not a trained metaphysician, nor a theologian of the schools. He seeks to portray the source of a profound religious experience common to a group of believers knit by the closest ties of affection to Jesus and to each other. He even interrupts his meditation (as our text at present stands) to warn his readers against identifying it with a wrong person, or recognising the claim of another community. Behind his brief sentences lie regions of thought into which we cannot always penetrate with confidence, and he who would enter them must do so with humility. Though the words are simple, and the phrases are brief and seem crystal-clear, yet there is evidence enough that in the second century there were already differences of reading and interpretation. Moreover, the time order is curiously dislocated. The effect of the Incarnation is described (vv. 12, 13) before it is recorded to have taken place (ver. 14). The mingling of the prehistoric and the historic as well as the references to the Baptist (vv. 6-8, 15) have suggested different theories of partition and combination.

'In the beginning was the Logos.' The activity afterwards attached to this august conception seems to imply that it was no unconscious energy, or simple 'utterance.' However difficult it is for the modern mind to conceive the thought of God as subsisting in any way apart from him, or as constituting a second personality within him,

[1] The English rendering 'Word' comes from the Latin *Verbum*. I follow the interpreters who expound it from the Greek side, not from the Jewish *Memra* (*ante*, p. 291). In tracing the origin of the Prologue to a Wisdom-hymn, Dr. Harris does not explain how the Logos took its place.

the prologue does in effect ascribe to the Word at once an eternal fellowship with God, and an independent activity in the world of space and time. At the outset it is sufficient to affirm that he 'was.' Of his origin nothing is said, for he had none. He was not 'formed' like Wisdom, nor begotten or born out of God. No explanation of his nature is needed; it is enough to declare his Being, the majestic affirmation of eternity. That solemn 'was' which carried with it the emphasis of transcendent existence is repeated in the next declaration of his fellowship with God. Hebrew piety had pictured Wisdom as present with God when he established the heavens. Johannine thought does not localise the mysterious connexion of the Logos with God, it is enough to affirm that it was so close that the Logos was *theos* or 'divine.'[1] But it was so important that it is reiterated at the beginning of the next triplet of lines. There were other interpretations of the Deity, and by and by other entities like *Nous* and *Monogenês* were set above the Logos, which here takes the place in Greek thought of the Spirit of God brooding upon the waters of the deep.[2]

Three great objects have presented themselves before the human mind in the higher religions, God, the World, and Man. To conceive their relations, to frame some intelligible account of the powers which brought the universe into being with its steadfast order, and organised the families of mankind under solemnities of law and right, was the work of the inspired prophet or the philosophic seer. The permanences of nature appealed to one class of minds, the conflicts of history to another. The Greek thinker viewed the scene of existence scientifically; the

[1] Our version fails to recognise the distinction between *theos* with the definite article, to denote God absolutely, and *theos* alone, 'God in an improper sense,' Philo, *On Dreams*, i. §, 229, or 'divine' (so Gardner, *The Ephesian Gospel*, p. 315; Moffatt, *New Test.* 'the Logos was divine'). It was in this sense that the term was used of Christians, who were said to become 'gods,' *i.e.* immortal, and the formula finally emerged that 'God became man that man might become God.' Cp. J. E. C., *Phases of Early Christianity*, pp. 56-59.

[2] Cp. Pfleiderer, 'The author desires to exclude from the very outset the Gnostic doctrine that the world was created by a number of subordinate spiritual beings (archons and æons),' *Primitive Christianity*, vol. iv. p. 4.

vision of Persia and Israel interpreted the progress of events dramatically. To the one the phenomena of the heavens revealed the presence of a divine Intelligence; to the other the warfare of good and evil pointed to the ultimate victory of the Supreme Good. And in either case the dominant agency spread itself with more or less emphasis over the adjoining field, and bound the whole into one unity. Under the sovereignty of the Lord All-knowing, Ahura Mazda, in close fellowship with his eternal being, Zarathustra reckoned six Immortal Holy Ones,[1] the manifestations of his heavenly rule. Among these was Asha, the principle of Righteous Order, which governed the courses of the stars, and was the source of law for the conscience and for society.[2] In the mysterious option between the two primal Spirits, good and evil, Ahura chose Asha, who was invested with creative power, and 'clothed him with the massy heavens as with a garment.' By his side is the Good Mind (in later texts Ahura's 'first creation,' just as the Logos could be designated God's 'first-born'). He is the thought of God which inspires the prophet and dwells in every good man. The order of creation, the revelation of the Good Religion, the establishment of Righteousness and truth in the final victory over evil, are the work of this sacred pair.[3] Hellenic wisdom did not view the 'process of the suns' as an advance to any 'divine event,' however far off. But mythology readily supplied figures which could be pressed into the service of the scientific imagination. The ancient priestesses of Dodona sang of the eternity of Zeus, 'Zeus was, Zeus is, Zeus will be.' But he was not alone in silent majesty. Already in Homer he has a 'dear child,' Athena, a kind of feminine counterpart or personalised Mind, with whom he communes as with his

[1] Or, otherwise, Bountiful Immortals.

[2] In the form Arta it appears in such names as Artaxerxes. Its philological equivalent *Rita* is one of the most significant conceptions in the Vedic hymns, where it represents the idea of Law in the phenomena of nature, in the ritual of sacrifice, and in human conduct, corresponding to goodness and truth. Heaven and earth are said to have been born in its lap.

[3] See Moulton, *Early Zoroastrianism* (1913).

own heart. For Aeschylus she has a deep moral significance, for she is the energy which transmutes evil into good, and turns the avenging furies into beneficent and gracious powers. The Homeric interpreters, Plato tells us, already saw in her the symbol of Mind and Thought.[1] The ideal city should be dedicated to Zeus, Athena, and Hestia (the Hearth), representing the world, the state, and the home, as bound into one fellowship of power, intelligence, and ethical order.[2] When the Stoics embraced the whole field of nature and human life under the Godhead of Zeus as himself the Logos, the creative and disposing Reason pervading the world which it never ceased to guide and govern, they still found room for Athena as his 'understanding.' Plutarch applied to her the famous inscription of the goddess at Sais, 'I am what is and will be and has been,' the affirmation of her eternity, and the orator Ælius Aristides in the middle of the second century told how Zeus in ordering everything appointed her as his coadjutor and fellow-counsellor. To Hermes in like manner, in his character of Logos, there was subsequently ascribed creative action. He was not only the interpreter, he was also the author of what had been, what was, and what would be.[3] The Christian thinker had thus a whole sphere of activity for the Logos to occupy as the energy which produced and maintained the universe. The Vulgate which underlies so much of our translation had no word available to express the Greek term for 'becoming' or 'coming into being,' and could only use a passive verb indicating direct 'fabrication.' Hellenic language was more subtle and less definite, and described a continuous process rather than specific acts of creative might, such as the record in Genesis detailed.

Thus through the potency of the Logos was the entire field of existence filled by the universe and its inhabitants. Every other type of creative intermediary was excluded,

[1] *Cratylus*, p. 407. [2] *Laws*, v. p. 745 B.

[3] See the document extracted by Reitzenstein from Hippolytus, *Ref.* v. ii. (*Poimandres*, p. 88), and attributed by him to a pre-Christian Naassene (Ophite) source. Cp. Legge, *Forerunners*, ii. p. 28, for their origin in Asia Minor. Another example in Dieterich's *Abraxas*, pp. 3, 66.

and for any form of dualism there was no room. 'In him,' runs our version, 'was life.' Hebrew piety had loved to contrast the God of Israel with the idol deities of the nations around as 'the living God.' The life which he possessed flowed out through the world, so that to those who trusted him he was the 'fountain of life' whence all gifts and graces streamed in on the believing soul, just as all physical powers poured moment by moment through the visible scene. As the Psalmist looked to this everflowing source, he added with joyous confidence, 'In thy light shall we see light' (xxxv. 9), the light of duty and hope on dark and hidden ways, where the worshipper might tread securely under the guidance of the two angels of Light and Faithfulness or Truth (Ps. xliii. 3). These activities were inherent in the Logos as divine.[1] They maintained the fabric of the world, and were the origin of the moral and spiritual faculties of man, for 'the life was the light of men.'[2] The Logos was thus the organ of Revelation addressing itself to humanity. The note of universality is struck at once. Humanity was not divided into Jew and Gentile, so that Justin Martyr could rightly claim that whatever things had been rightly said by the teachers of the past were the property of the Christians. It was the appeal of the new faith to the higher culture surrounding it. The former adherent of the Law divested himself of all exclusive pretensions, and threw wide open the gates of knowledge that men of every race might enter in and find a home. So the 'sweet singer' of the Odes of Solomon proclaimed that 'the dwelling-place of the Word is man, and its truth is love' (xii. 11). Yet the Light had not, after all, an undisputed sway. It shone, indeed, with a radiance

[1] The combination of life and light in Deity does not occur in Philo. Grill, *Entstehung des Vierten Evangeliums*, i. (1902), p. 218, agrees with M. Jean Réville that Philo does not conceive the Logos as 'life.' God, of course, is the 'fountain of life,' *On Fugitives*, xxxvi., Cohn-Wendland, iii. p. 152, § 198. The Light of the Lord is the source of the risen life (Psalms of Sol. iii. 16); the terms are frequent in the Odes of Solomon, x. 1; xi. 10; xii. 3; xxxii. 1; xli. 6, 15. In the *Hermetica* the 'First Mind' is 'light and life,' i. 5, 6, 12, 21; xiii. 9, 18. Cp. *Asclep.* iii. 41b.

[2] The author here leaves the natural order of Gen. i. to concentrate on the spiritual work of the Logos in mankind.

that nothing could interrupt or destroy in timeless constancy. But it encountered a mysterious darkness. This was the symbol of evil, of greed, ignorance, impurity, of which the Apostle Paul could say to his converts, 'Ye once were darkness, but are now light in the Lord.' In the rapid strokes with which the activity of the Logos is sketched the author does not pause to indicate its origin. There were ancient myths of conflict between the darkness and the light. Are there any echoes of such strife in the last words of this historic retrospect—'And the darkness did not overcome it'? Creation in the past had been wrought out of darkness by the entry of light. But the physical fact may also have a spiritual correspondence. The darkness which the light dispelled never regained control. Similarly, the writer hints, the darkness of ignorance and sin will not prevail over the Logos-light of the world in Christ. In the allusive style in which so much of the Gospel is written the victory of Christianity is here foretold.[1] Is this note of triumph justified? There will be more to say of this hereafter. But the words are capable of different interpretations. From the sense of 'grasping' the meaning diverges into that of laying hold and so mastering, overpowering, or of comprehending. When Paul describes his violent diversion from one course to another, he says he was 'apprehended' (with a kind of arrest) by Christ Jesus, and in his turn sought to 'apprehend' (or attain) the resurrection (Phil. iii. 12). We use the word 'apprehend' for the capture of an offender or to express the mental act of grasping or realising the meaning of an argument or the significance of a truth. So did the darkness (according to our translators) fail to discern the nature of the light, or appropriate the knowledge it could impart.[2]

[1] Schwarz (*Nachrichten der Götting. Gel. Gesellschaft*, 1908, p. 532) argues that the light is already the incarnate Christ, who was not overcome by death but was shining on in the community of believers.

[2] Norden pointed out in his history of Greek prose the remarkable parallel in the verse thus interpreted with the reflection of the Ephesian Herakleitus on the failure of men to understand the Logos, and their preference for living as if they had an understanding of their own. See the passage quoted by Pfleiderer, *Primitive Christianity*, vol. iv.

At this point the delineation of the activity of the Logos in the abstract is suddenly interrupted by the announcement of the advent of a man sent from God. The opening phrase of ver. 6 (employing the same verb as in Mark i. 4), 'a man appeared,' introduces the ministry of the Baptist. Like a prophet of old, he has a divine mission, and he comes to bear witness of the Light, that through his testimony all may believe. The emphatic repetition of this statement with the express warning that 'he was not the Light' has suggested that some such claim had been made for him, and the Gospel afterwards contains hints of rivalry between the two teachers. It was necessary, therefore, to indicate his inferiority to the Incarnate Logos. That there were early traditions about John's ministry which were cherished by his followers may be

p. 7 f. (Herakleitus was read by Jews as Philo's quotation shows, *Allegories*, etc., i. *ad fin.*).

The two verses 4 and 5 are open to different treatment. Important MSS., early versions, and second century authors, agree in attaching the last words of our ver. 3 to the beginning of ver. 4, thus: 3. 'Without him nothing came into existence. 4. What came into existence in him was life.' This is adopted by Westcott: 'the word *life* is used both times in the same sense to express the divine element in creation, that in virtue of which things "are," each according to the fullness of its being. It is the sum of all that *is* physically, intellectually, morally, spiritually in the world and in man' (John i. p. 62). The world and its inhabitants have been brought into being, creation has been completed. How did it subsist? As a manifestation of divine power and purpose it had a life of its own in the Logos. That the universe was in some sense alive was a current philosophical conception. 'Using the language of probability,' declares Timæus to Socrates (in Plato, 30 B), 'we may say that the world became a living creature truly endowed with soul and intelligence by the providence of God.' One of the Hermetic teachers describes it as 'fulness of life' (xii. ii. 15), and adds that 'the Father willed that it should be a living being.' The phrase 'was life in him' follows a common Hebrew expression by which the predicate is joined to the subject by a simple affirmation, 'I was a reproach,' 'this man shall be peace,' 'ye once were darkness.' The world lived in the energy of the Logos, just as Paul could say concerning God, 'in him we live and move and have our being.' Loisy proposes to treat the pronoun as neuter instead of masculine, 'That which came into being—in it was life,' and following Catholic tradition identifies 'life' with the Incarnate Christ (so also Harnack and others), but this seems premature and involves a double announcement of the grand climax to which all history pointed. So transcendent an event as the appearance of the Logos in human form could hardly be introduced so obscurely. In ver. 5 the last clause is retrospective of the whole past, and shows that the tense 'shineth' is not contemporary, but a generalisation of uninterrupted continuance.

plausibly inferred from the story of his birth related by Luke. There are later indications that the dignity of Messiah was affirmed of him against Jesus.[1] Curious traces of his eminence survive in the literature of the strange sect known as the Mandeans, in the lower regions of Mesopotamia. They preserve in their liturgies and the 'Book of John' the remains of a *gnosis* of Life and Light closely related to the Gnostic movement which established itself in the East in the first centuries of Hellenism.[2] Whether these verses formed part of the original prologue has often been doubted. They introduce a definite historical note in the midst of a philosophical sketch of the divine agency in nature and man. Place has been found for them after ver. 18, before the exposition of John's witness.[3]

'The true Light which lighteth every man was coming into the world.' The epithet is not the common word for true, and might perhaps be better represented by the word 'real,' like the 'real worshippers,' the 'real bread,' and even the 'real God' (xvii. 3).[4] In the present arrangement of the text the statement describes the entry of Christ during the preaching of the Baptist. But the grammatical order permits the attachment of the words 'coming into the world' to 'every man,' and so the Latin version understood it.[5] Jewish phrases are in the

[1] See the Pseudo-Clementine *Recognitions*, xx., quoted by W. Bauer, *Das Johannes-Evangelium* (1925), p. 15.

[2] See the translations by Lidzbarski, 1890 and 1915, and cp. Bauer, *ibid.* In the two issues of *Forschungen zur Religion* (1923) under the title of 'Eucharisterion' (essays presented to Prof. Gunkel), Prof. Bultmann (2 Teil, pp. 1-26), after elaborating the Wisdom conception as the background of the Prologue, derives it from a pre-Christian source (omitting vv. 6-8, 15, 17, and one or two other probably Christian touches), and supposes it to have been originally composed in the community founded by John the Baptist, and afterwards adapted to Jesus. Cp. the note to Lect. II., p. 287, for the further development of his views.

[3] The word is in constant use in the Johannine writings (21 times), and the corresponding verb 'to bear witness' no less than 40. 'Believe' is still more frequent, the Gospel containing about 100 occurrences. The corresponding noun 'faith' is never employed. Hermes, after receiving his commission to preach, says, 'I believe and bear witness that I enter into life and light,' *Poimandres*, 32.

[4] Cp. 'true (*i.e.* real) vision,' *Poimandres*, 30.

[5] 'Was coming' like 'was baptizing' describes a continuous operation; 'came,' ver. 11, a single advent like John's, ver. 7.

background. In the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs (Levi xiv. 4) we read of 'the light of the Law which was given to lighten every man'; and Rabbinical teaching declared 'Thou (God) givest light to those above and to those below, and to all that come into the world.'[1] The removal of vv. 6-8 would bring vv. 9-10 into sequence on vv. 4-5, and make this wider application possible. It will be observed that there is a certain rhythmic repetition of affirmation and denial:

All things came into being through him,
  Nothing came into being without him.
The life was the light of men,
  The darkness did not apprehend it.
It (*or* he) was the true light, which lighteth every man
    coming into the world,
  And the world knew him not.

The universal meaning for which Westcott pleaded so emphatically becomes thus quite appropriate, and the Incarnation only rises into view with the statement (ver. 11) 'he came unto his own,' to what belonged to him (neuter), 'and his own' (masculine) 'received him not.' What,—who,—were 'his own'?[2] As the agent of creation the whole world—the term sometimes expands into the visible scene with all its contents animate and inanimate—sometimes contracts into conscious humanity—belonged to him, and all mankind were his. The Rabbis said that the Law was really delivered at Sinai to the seventy nations of the whole world, though Israel only was there to hear. But it seems preferable to limit the scope of the phrase to Israel, the Lord's portion, the inheritance which he had chosen. Wisdom had already experienced a like fate; she had called, but the scorners had refused (Prov. i. 24). Through law and prophecy special preparation had been made for the Messiah, which rendered his rejection the more gross and perverse. There did the

[1] Schlatter, *Die Sprache und Heimath des Vierten Evangelisten* (1902), p. 19. 'All that came into the world' was a regular Jewish phrase.

[2] The term was used in the mysteries. Hermes praises the Father, 'Holy is God, who wills to be known, and is known by his own,' *Poimandres*, 31.

Logos come as the Baptist had come ; and though Israel had not responded, yet it was the source of a community of believers in his name. The description of their new birth 'out of God' (ver. 13) can surely apply only to Christians. Wisdom had already made men 'friends of God and prophets' (Wisd. of Sol. vii. 27). The reception of the Logos conferred on the disciple the right, the valid claim, to become a child of God.[1] This mystery the Gospel afterwards will explain. Its source is stated in the briefest terms (ver. 14), where the common particle 'and' covers a connexion not in time but in thought with what precedes, which thus receives its explanation :

'So the Logos became flesh and dwelt among us.'

[1] On this new birth cp. Lect. VI. The Greek term *exousia*, used in the Synoptics of the 'authority' with which Jesus taught, appears also in *Poimandres*, 32. This prayer was copied into a collection of Christian prayers found in a papyrus of the third century. On possible additions cp. Scott, *Hermetica*, ii. pp. 69, 73.—'Children,' not 'sons' as in Pauline language (Rom. viii. 14), cp. Jesus (Matt. v. 9, 45) ; for the Fourth Gospel there is but one Son of God. M. Loisy (1902) adopted the remarkable reading of ver. 13 in the second century, 'who (sing.) . . . was born,' attaching the pronoun to 'his name,' and identifying the subject with the Incarnate Logos. This seems to lie behind the language of Justin in *Dial.* lxiii. 2 and other passages, and is twice quoted by Irenæus, iii. 16, 2, and 19, 2, in the Latin version ; it occurs also in the Old Latin of the second century (Tischendorf, b). Tertullian quotes it twice in his treatise on 'the Flesh of Christ' against the Valentinian Gnostics. In the first passage, xix., he roundly charges his opponents with having altered the number to the plural to suit their own theories concerning the 'spirituals' (cp. J. E. C., *Phases of Early Christianity*, p. 315). In the second, xxiv., he finds an answer to 'Ebion' (*ante*, p. 262). The reading was known two hundred years later to Ambrose and Augustine. Blass in his Greek text (1902) omitted the pronoun 'who,' but printed the verb in the singular, 'he was born,' referring, of course, to the Logos, and this was adopted by Zahn in his *Introd. to the N.T.* (cp. *Commentary*, 1908, p. 76). Westcott and Hort rejected it as 'Western, as a reading of the text possibly Latin only.' In an essay in the *Sitzungsberichte* of the Prussian Royal Academy of Sciences, 1915, p. 550, Harnack adopted Blass's reading, and argued that the verse was originally a marginal note to ver. 14, which was afterwards incorporated into the text. As it could not be admitted into ver. 14, and did not fit the context of ver. 13, it was subjected to different adjustments from different scribes to accommodate it to its new position.

LECTURE IV

THE PERSON

'THE Word became flesh and dwelt among us.'

So, the author of the Prologue teaches, did God show his love for the world, and his purpose for its salvation. In the brevity of the announcement vast issues are wrapped up, which history gradually unfolded as the Church made its conquering way through the Empire, and theology sought in controversy after controversy to express in intelligible intellectual form. Here is the declaration which won the Greek to Christ, and secured for the Sermon on the Mount a permanent place within the robe of dogmatic glory woven around his person, ready to come forth with new power if that robe should ever be withdrawn.

I

It was doubtless not the first time that the conception of the Logos had been applied to Jesus. The doctrine was known in the Church at Antioch, and was probably diffused throughout the East. When Ignatius wrote to the believers at Ephesus on his way to the martyrdom for which he craved at Rome, he had ardently embraced a doctrine of divine incarnation.[1] Beside God the Father he sets 'Christ our God.' A wondrous sign had pointed to him from the first. At his birth from the Virgin Mary a star shone forth in the sky brighter than all, and round

[1] On the absence of definite signs of acquaintance with the Johannine teaching cp. Lect. I, p. 205.

it gathered the other stars with sun and moon in chorus. So was it made known to the ages that God was manifested as man for the newness of eternal life, and what had been prepared by God began (Eph. xix). The union of Christ with God was the closest possible. He was the Father's will, the blood shed upon the cross was God's, and to follow the example of God's passion is the writer's eager desire (Rom. vi. 3). To the Magnesians he describes Christ as with the Father before the ages and made manifest at their end (vi. 1). He is God's Logos, come forth from Silence, who in all respects was well-pleasing to him that sent him (viii. 2).[1] The connexion of the term Logos (its only occurrence in these letters) with speech is implied in its issue from the divine Silence, and the fanciful designation of Christ elsewhere (Rom. viii. 2) as 'the mouth by which the Father hath spoken truly.' A similar figure is combined with another Johannine term by a poet rich in the knowledge of God, 'because the mouth of the Lord is the true Word and the door of his light' (Odes of Solomon, xii. 3). There were varieties of experience seeking after new forms of expression over a wide area in the Eastern Mediterranean lands.

By the divine condescension the Eternal Logos became flesh. Such a union might well seem incredible to those who had heard the prophet's declaration, 'All flesh is as grass,' perishable as the flowers of the field. In this identification of Deity with a bodily constitution most interpreters have seen an implied refutation of the current heresy which denied that Christ had 'come in the flesh.' It sprang from the Oriental belief that matter (in the broadest terms) was the seat of evil. This is stated with

[1] Silence played a strange part in religious imagination. In the account of the Valentinian Gnosis given by Irenæus (i. 1) she appears as the consort of the Eternal and Unbegotten Buthos (the Deep), and gives birth to Mind (also called Monogenês), who in his turn produces Logos and Life. The liturgy published by Dieterich (1903) as Mithraic (p. 6) instructs the worshipper, 'Straightway lay thy finger on thy mouth and say, "Silence, Silence, symbol of the living incorruptible God, protect me, Silence."' 'Symbol' is a cult-term by which the members of the fellowship recognise each other. In Christian usage it came to denote a confession of faith, *ibid.* p. 64.

the utmost emphasis by one of the Hermetic writers who roundly asserts that ' the cosmos is fulness (*pleroma*) of evil,' just as God is ' fulness of good ' (vi. 4). The flesh of Christ, then, which even Paul had viewed as only ' the likeness of sin's flesh ' (Rom. viii. 3), could not have been the seat of either suffering or temptation. From that element in the constitution of man which was so universal and inevitable that the Elder could say that ' the whole cosmos lieth in the Evil One ' (1 John v. 19), Christ must have been free. The Ephesian Church was thus infected with the belief that Christ's flesh was not real ; it was in some sense only phantasmal or apparitional ; the Elder viewed with alarm the power of Antichrist in the spread of this denial of his true humanity (1 John iv. 2f. 2 John 7). Ignatius was fighting the same falsehood, and vehemently warned the Church at Smyrna against the ' beasts in the shape of men ' who declared that Jesus only seemed to suffer and rise again. The belief took many forms in later days. It was implicitly met in the Gospel by various touches implying the actuality of Christ's experience, his weariness beside the well, his tears at the grave of his dead friend, his thirst upon the cross. It is significant that hundreds of years earlier Buddhist reverence for the Teacher had conceived that as undefiled he must have been lifted above all contact with mundane experience. He had therefore never left the heaven of Delight in which he dwelt before his incarnation, to be born on earth, he sent forth a specially created shape which appeared to attain Buddhahood and proclaim the Truths, while he himself remained on high.[1] In the same way there were Christians who believed that the Christ descended from above at the Baptism on the man Jesus, and ' flew back again ' (as Irenæus says) into the Fulness before the crucifixion.[2] The idea took various forms in later Agnosticism in which the dualism of the East acquired a stronger hold.

[1] *Kathā Vatthu*, xviii. 1, 2 (Engl. transl. *Points of Controversy*, p. 323 ff.).

[2] See his account of the views of Cerinthus, a contemporary of the Evangelist, which John (according to Irenæus) sought to counteract in the Gospel (iii. 11, 1 ; cp. i. 26, 1).

The interpretation of the statement that 'the Word was made flesh' in terms of the Greek Logos implies that the Thought or Reason of God, conceived personally, united himself with the manhood of Jesus. But it has never established itself unchallenged. One or two modern instances may illustrate opposite views. In a little book entitled *What is the Truth about Jesus Christ?* (1913) the distinguished historian of doctrine, Prof. Loofs of Halle, argued that the Johannine Logos has nothing to do with philosophy.

'I, for my part, never considered this hypothesis probable. For it is quite plain that the beginning of John's Gospel refers to the beginning of the first book of Moses. There we have the same introduction: *In the beginning.* And every schoolboy knows what the medium of creation was here. The word! For *and God said* is repeated in the narrative like the burden of a song. It is likewise well known how often we read in the prophets of the Old Testament: *The word of the Lord came unto the prophet.* John, in my opinion, was thinking of these two circumstances. God first revealed himself in the creation, and then to Israel, especially when his word came to the prophets. Jesus Christ not only brought the Word of God as the prophets did; he was the Word in everything he said and did; the word was made flesh in him. I do not believe that there is an incarnation theory behind these words. The sentence "The word was made flesh" means more than when we say, *e.g.* "In this man all the amiable qualities of his forefathers are personified." But this way of speaking, in my opinion, comes nearer to the meaning of what John says than the later incarnation theories'[1] (p. 188).

Does the next phrase 'and tabernacled among us' confirm this view? So Wisdom had been promised that her 'tabernacle' should be in Israel.[2] You may compile a long list of passages from the Old Testament in which this image is employed to denote the sacramental presence of God among his people. It is the prophetic promise to the nation at its restoration (Ezek. xxxvii. 27), and

[1] Prof. H. R. Mackintosh likewise dissents from the view that the Logos means rational cosmic order; it is 'uttered revealing speech, not immanent reason'; *The Person of Jesus Christ* (1912), p. 116.

[2] The Hebrew word for 'tabernacle' is simply 'dwelling,' and the verb means 'to dwell.'

illumines the majestic picture of the return of the divine Glory to occupy the holy house (*ibid.* xliii. 7). In the later symbolic presentation of the Dwelling (or Tabernacle) of the wanderings the promise that Yahweh would 'dwell' among the children of Israel is realised as the cloud covers the consecrated Tent and the divine Glory fills it (Exod. xxix. 45, xl. 34). One school of early Christians used the same figure in their Eucharistic prayer: 'We give thanks to thee, Holy Father, for thy Holy Name which thou didst make to tabernacle in our hearts.'[1] Does the Johannine 'tabernacled (dwelt) in us' mean simply 'in our hearts'? So it is understood, for example, by Prof. Jannaris,[2] who rejects the identification of the term with either the Jewish *Memra* or the Hellenic 'Reason.' In the opening statement he sees (like Prof. Loofs) a reference to the 'utterance' by which God created the world—'that well-known oracular utterance which God made unto (πρὸς) Himself, and which having been instrumental (δι' αὐτοῦ) in the creation, is naturally represented as a creative power, a creator, that is *a god*,—god and creator being two synonymous terms.' But at the reappearance of the Logos in ver. 14 he argues that it is so far off that it cannot be the same 'utterance,' while the particle 'and' connects it with what immediately precedes. It refers to those to whom authority or power was granted to become children of God. It is, in short, the *exousia* just named (ver. 12), 'and the said word of authority,' 'the empowering word' 'the mandate' became flesh, and (as he explains) 'lodged in our bodies.' At this point the exposition abruptly stops, and the vision of the glory of the 'utterance' like that of a father's only son disappears in vacancy. But of the criticism on which it is founded we may hear again.

Of the process of this stupendous event by which the Logos became embodied in a man's flesh nothing is said. Its method is left in discreet silence.[3] What, then, was its issue? Unlike 'his own' who slew him there were 'those who received him,' and one of them speaks in their

[1] *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, x.

[2] *Z.N.T.W.* (1901), p. 13.

[3] Cp. Lect. V, p. 363.

name, ' We beheld his glory.' The vision was not limited to the Twelve, nor even to the wider group of disciples in Judea ; it was the privilege of believers gathered in the fellowship of the Church, to some doubtless more clear, more radiant, more vivid, more intense, than to others.[1] It was fed by personal memories, sacred traditions, and above all by ineffable moments of joy, peace, love, quickened by the emotions of worship in hymn and prayer, in common meal and sacrament. The continuity of experience was so strong that even one who had never seen him in the flesh could speak as with the assurance of an eye-witness, just as a Buddhist disciple who had grasped the meaning of the Four Truths or practised the sacred Raptures was said to ' see the Buddha ' though a hundred leagues away.[2] ' Glory,'—the term which designated the radiant being of the Deity on whom Moses had longed to gaze (Exod. xxxiii. 18, 22), was the shining vesture of heavenly beings (Enoch lxii. 16), and supplied a name for God as Lord of Glory, or Great Glory.[3] As with other transcendental conceptions it is not displayed in the person of Jesus (as at the Transfiguration, Luke ix. 31), but it has not been surrendered on his entry into humanity. Its outward splendour has indeed been relinquished, but he will resume it when he is once more with the Father in the union which he had with him ere the world began (xvii. 5, 24). It is, however, visible in his wondrous works ; it is first manifested at Cana (ii. 11) ; and it dwells unseen within him, the inner spiritual power of word and work through which the Father's presence is made known to those who understand (viii. 43). Had not Philo also said that God filled the Logos with divine powers ? So full was the Incarnate Logos of these heavenly energies that he was like an only son to whom the possessions of his sire had descended in completest measure. Words change their applications and even their

[1] Cp. Odes of Solomon, xli. 3-4. ' We live in the Lord by his grace, and life we receive in his Messiah, and marvellous is he who has given us of his glory.'

[2] Cp. J. E. C., *Buddhism and Christianity*, p. 129.

[3] So frequently in Enoch, and even in the Testaments, ' Levi,' iii. 4.

meanings, and the ' grace and truth ' were not the same as their Hebrew antecedents in the ' loving kindness and faithfulness ' of Israel's God (Exod. xxxiv. 6). They were the divine gifts—capacity of service, life, knowledge, light—of which the Logos was the source, communicated through Christ to those who ' received him ' and believed on his name. Not even yet is he formally identified with the historic personality of Jesus. With an obvious breach of sequence (' full of grace and truth,' 14, leads straight to ' for of his fulness we all received,' 16) the Baptist is again introduced to testify to his superiority. His voice still resounds for readers to hear as he declares that though the Incarnate followed him in time he nevertheless had precedence before him in rank, for as the Logos who was with God he was eternally prior to the prophet on earth.[1]

The prologue marches majestically to its close with rapid affirmations. Its language is justified by an appeal to the believer's experience. The Incarnate was recognised as full of grace and truth (16), for those who accepted him were conscious of his gifts. Paul had proclaimed that the Fulness dwelt in him.[2] In the fellowship of the community and the vision which it begot the disciple realised the supreme gift transcending all others. To the Jew, for whom pre-eminently the prologue was written, the Law had been a divine gift, made through Moses (17). The citation of the historic name leads to the announcement of the Person in whom the Logos has become flesh, bringing the new gifts—no longer to a single people but to humanity at large—once more described as ' grace and truth.' These take the place of the Law which is needed no more.

Finally it is emphatically declared that ' No man hath seen God at any time ' (18). The statement is a per-

[1] The phrase ' he that cometh after me,' heard again in 27, is borrowed with a difference from Mark i. 7.

[2] Col. i. 19, ii. 9. The *Pleroma* was already a theological term for the sum or totality of the divine powers. Its origin is unknown, but it has been conjecturally ascribed to Egypt. Cp. the Hermetic passage already cited, p. 325, and the well-known dissertation of Lightfoot, *Coloss.*, p. 255.

emptory repudiation of the aims and claims of the mystery religions. In these the devout worshipper was prepared to behold divine things and even divine persons. Wondrous lights shone, strange objects became visible, and hallowed forms appeared. After the invocation of the Deity, 'Come hither, Lord,' the believer (according to the so-called Mithras Liturgy) was told that he should 'see a youthful God fair of form with fiery locks in a white robe with scarlet mantle wearing a fiery crown.'[1] 'The vision hath something quite peculiar to itself,' says a pious Hellenist, 'they who attain it are held fast and attracted by it like iron by a magnet.'[2] Behind the Prologue stands Judaism. Even at Horeb when the Ten Words were proclaimed the people 'saw no form –only a voice' (Deut. iv. 12), and with the refinement of later days the Son of Sirach could ask, 'Who hath seen him that he may declare him?' (Ecclus. xliii. 31). Yet Moses had beheld his form in the mysterious cloud that came down to speak with him at the tent door (Num. xii. 8); Job could say, 'I had heard of thee with the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee' (xlii. 5).[3] Enoch was admitted like the Elders of Israel (Exod. xxiv. 10) to behold his heavenly splendour, and John in ecstasy looked through the door opened in the sky, and saw One sitting upon the throne (Rev. iv. 2). Philosophical Judaism in the language of Philo emphatically affirmed the invisibility of God, and the Elder ranges himself on the same side: 'No man hath beheld God at any time' (1 John iv. 12). It was the doctrine of the Hermetic mystic; God is ever existent and cannot, therefore, be presented through sense, 'but if you have the power to see with the eyes of the mind, he will manifest himself to you' (v. 1, 2). It is the intellectual counterpart (for the

[1] Dieterich, *op. cit.* p. 10. For the Isis mystery described by Apuleius cp. J. E. C. *Phases*, p. 224.

[2] Quoted by Heitmüller, *Schriften des N.T.*[3], iv. p. 45. Cp. Angus, *The Mystery Religions and Christianity* (1925), p. 135.

[3] Dr. Buchanan Gray ('Numbers' in *Internat. Crit. Comm.*, 1903, p. 126) remarks, 'It would be a mistake to attempt to harmonise all the O.T. statements on the visibility of God; they represent different stages of thought and belief on the subject.'

mind must first be pure) of the vision promised by Jesus to the pure in heart.[1]

The language of the Gospel is on another plane, Jesus 'hath declared him.' It was the technical term for the interpretation of oracles by the priest, or omens by the soothsayer, or the secret rites by the mystagogue to the candidate in process of initiation.[2] In the bosom of the Father he shared the most intimate and tender relation to him, so that the divine thoughts and purposes were all known to him as his only Son. The term Only-begotten (from the Latin *unigenitus*) has acquired for English readers—perhaps through association with the words of the Nicene Creed, 'begotten, not made,' in opposition to Arianism—a flavour which does not really belong to it. It suggests an obscure process of generation, strange and marvellous, in the inner being of Deity. But that has been imported into it. In the ancient poem 'on Nature' by the philosopher Parmenides (who came to Athens from South Italy when Socrates was a very young man) 'the Existent' is described as 'unborn' and hence 'imperishable,' 'wholly *monogenês*,' not 'only begotten' but an 'only one,' *i.e.* 'entirely unique.'[3] In common use the son of the widow of Nain, the daughter of Jairus, the poor demoniac whom the disciples could not heal, are all called *monogenês*; they are only children. Justin, who in one passage terms Christ *monogenês*, in another describes him simply as *monos* 'only.' The word seems strangely inharmonious when it is combined with the alternative reading 'the only God.' It is a reading of great antiquity, and has divided critics of the first rank belonging to different schools of interpretation into opposite groups. In the difficult field of textual investigation where judgment is so evenly divided, only the expert has a right to an opinion; and when the experts do not agree the student can only fall back on feeling or instinct,

[1] Cp. Kennedy, *St. Paul and the Mystery Religions* (1913), p. 7.

[2] Cp. the long list of examples collected by Wetstein (*in loc.*) in the eighteenth century. Cp. the function of the 'Helper' or spirit of truth as 'Guide' (xvi. 13, Lect. VI, p. 448[3]).

[3] Diels, *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, i. p. 118 f.

which is liable to various influences from the general results of his own philosophic culture and religious experience. 'The only (or unique) God' has an unwelcome because an alien bizarre sound,[1] and we may be glad that we are not constrained by decisive preponderance of evidence to adopt it. Rather let the reader, seeking to understand the thought and life of early Christianity, contemplate the solemn picture of the Eternal Son in the bosom of the Father, whether as a timeless fact of the divine nature (as in ver. 1), or as the result of the re-entry of the ascended Christ into his pre-cosmic glory, whence he could through the Spirit guide the believers on his name into all truth.

II

That the Prologue early became a subject of discussion in the second century is evident from the textual variations which have been already noticed. It is not surprising, therefore, that modern interpreters should also differ. The foregoing brief exposition rests on the belief that it is not a translation from an Aramaic original; it was composed in Greek, and sought to present Jesus in terms of a current conception of Hellenic philosophy. The question then at once arises, was that conception intended by the writer to be the definite idea of Christ's person? Are his words and works to be explained by it? Does it provide the clue to his character, his teaching, and his activity?

[1] Wobbermin, *Religionsgeschichtliche Studien* (1896), shows that it was an epithet applied in various connexions in Greek religious nomenclature, especially in the Orphic communities. Athena is addressed as *Monogenês* in an Orphic hymn, Abel, *Orphica*, p. 75. On the Jewish side it appears in various passages of the Septuagint, *e.g.* Judg. xi. 34; Tobit iii. 15; Wisdom vii. 22. In view of the use of Psalm xxii (in Greek) by the early Church its occurrence in 20 ('my darling') is especially significant, cp. Justin, *Dial.* 105. Reitzenstein, *Die Hellenistische Mysterienreligionen* [2] (1920), p. 160, quotes from a papyrus, the prayer 'I thank thee that the holy Spirit has been manifested to me, the Only One (*monogenês*), the Living.' In 1 *Clement*, xxv. 2, the Phœnix is called *monogenês*. The same epithet was applied to Dusares, son of a virgin goddess mother, at the Arabian city of Petra (cp. below, Lect. V, p. 379). The last of the Neo-Platonic teachers, known from his Damascene origin as Damascius, similarly attached it to an ancient Babylonian form, Mummu, son of Tiamat and Apsu, interpreted philosophically as the universe conceived as a system of ideas (analogous to the Logos); Bultmann, *Eucharist.* (2 Teil), p. 21.

Was it really composed by the Evangelist himself, and, if so, had he any previous material on which to work, such as a hymn to Wisdom which Dr. Rendel Harris has sought to discover behind it?[1] No confident answers can be given to such enquiries. The student soon learns that he must be content with probabilities. Some evidence there is for conjecture, if not for certainty, and to this the reader's attention may be invited.

The abrupt introduction of the historic figure of the Baptist (vv. 6-8) into the abstract picture of the function of the divine Logos in the universe and in humanity has been already noted. The resemblance of its opening words to the beginning of the Gospel of Mark has led to the belief that the passage is an intrusion brought into its present context from the original prelude to the narrative of the earthly mission of Christ.[2] Such a literary displacement could only be due to the adaptation of the Prologue to a Gospel previously existing. That other additions were made to the Gospel from time to time on a scale of considerable importance has been already shown (p. 219). By what authority they were effected it is, of course, impossible to determine. Our ignorance of the conditions under which the Gospel took its final shape leaves alternatives open to choice. Was the Prologue composed by the author of the Gospel himself, 'written last' (as Prof. Mackintosh suggests without allusion to the incorporation of other matter), or was it one of the contributions of the Fellowship which the Editor in charge of the book added to its earlier form? The answer to that question largely depends on the enquiry how far the Logos doctrine supplied the real basis for the presentation of Christ's ministry.[3]

[1] Cp. Lect. III, p. 296.

[2] Various positions have been from time to time assigned to it beside its suggested place before 19-28, and such a transposition carries 15 with it. The interruption caused by this latter verse was noticed by the English Priestley, already famous as the discoverer of oxygen, in the *Theological Repository* for 1769, p. 51, who proposed to place it after 18, but left 6-8 undisturbed.

[3] Various other efforts have been made to resolve the Prologue into simpler form, the most elaborate is perhaps that of Spitta, *Das Johannes-Evangelium* (1910), who leaves but a scanty remnant from which the

In the first place it should be noticed that while the term Logos in the exalted sense is never applied to Jesus after the Prologue, it is used elsewhere both in the Gospel and the First Letter with much greater freedom.[1] From the preaching of Jesus himself and his apostles (*e.g.* iv. 39, xvii. 20) it rises through various gradations of significance to a higher rank, 'the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's who sent me' (xiv. 24). It is a divine message, but it is something more; it is not only 'truth' (xvii. 17), it involves something to be obeyed and upheld, so that Jesus can say, 'He hath given me a commandment,' 'I keep his word' (viii. 55, xii. 49). Is it conceivable that he should speak thus in the character of the Eternal Logos? Yet his teaching has strange powers within it. It carries a purifying efficacy like the sacred formulae through which the candidates for the mysteries were purged of evil, 'Ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you' (xv. 3). It imparts to those who can receive it the means to transcend death and possess eternal life (v. 24, viii. 51), and it will appear at the judgment day to condemn those who rejected the heaven-sent Teacher (xiii. 13) who did not speak from himself (xii. 48, 49). Its absence is the cause of unbelief, for it dwells not in the hostile Jews, 'Ye have not his (God's) word abiding in you, for whom he sent, him ye believe not' (v. 38). To the valiant it brings the victory over the world, 'I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and God's word abideth in you, and ye have overcome the evil one' (1 John ii. 14; cp.

Logos is eliminated altogether. In view of the chronological difficulty in the connexion of vv. 12-13 and 14, it may be worth considering whether the description of Christian experience which involves the identification of 11 with the Incarnation may not have been a later addition. Then the statement that 'he came to his own and his own received him not' would refer to the rejection of the prophets (as in Mark xiii. 1-8 and Matt. xxiii. 34—apparently a quotation from 'The Wisdom of God,' Luke xi. 49-51). Finally, no lesser manifestation having been successful, 'the Word became flesh.' Ritschl was apparently so sensible of the want of proper union between 13 and 14 that he proposed to transfer 6-8 between them, Clemen, *op. cit.* p. 58.

[1] Some of the following paragraphs are taken from the Lecture on the Fourth Gospel in the author's *The Bible in the Nineteenth Century* (1903), p. 417 ff.

i. 10). As the verb 'abide' shows, in these passages the *logos* means more than an instruction or command, more even than the sum of Christ's teaching or revelation. It is habitually employed to express august spiritual relations, and its appearance denotes that the *logos* is here viewed as a divine principle of life, practically equivalent to those high modes of communion wherein the Father and Son may be said to come to the disciple and make their 'abode' with him.[1] But this in no way implies the presentation of Jesus himself as the Logos, and it is a moral force, not a cosmic agency, ethical and not metaphysical.

In the admirable work of the late M. Jean Réville on the Fourth Gospel (1901) we are warned that 'to try to explain the Gospel without taking account of the prologue is almost as reasonable as trying to construe a text in a foreign language without taking into account the grammar of that language' (p. 119). Such rigour seems not only needless but dangerous. It imposes one interpretation on a book which contains hints of more than one. Is it not wiser to adopt the writer's own statement of his purpose at the original close of the work in xx. 31 ?

> These are written that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing, ye may have life in his name.

Two aims are here formulated, the production of belief, and through belief the attainment of life. The emphasis laid on 'believing' throughout the Gospel (about 100 times) must have struck every reader. It is the more remarkable because the noun corresponding to the verb ('faith'), familiar to us in the Synoptic Gospels and the letters of Paul, occurs only once in the Johannine writings (1 John v. 4). It is evident at the outset that the belief which the Evangelist seeks to engender is not a simple intellectual act like the acceptance of a geometrical

[1] John xiv. 23. Cp. vi. 27, 56 ; viii. 31, 35 ; xii. 24, 34, 46 ; xiv. 10, 17 ; xv. 4-7, 9-10, 16 ; 1 John ii. 6, 10, etc. The other term (*rhēmata*), always in the plural, iii. 34, v. 47, etc., rarely attains this lofty significance ; but cp. vi. 63, 68, xv. 7, in passages that may come from other hands using a different idiom of devotion.

theorem such as that the three angles of a plane triangle are equal to two right angles, or the recognition of a historical truth, such as that Jesus was crucified under Pontius Pilate. The appeals which pervade the Gospel are addressed to the spiritual affections, 'Ye believe in God, believe also in me' (xiv. 1); 'believe that I am in the Father and the Father in me,' or else, it is added, with a direct reference to the 'works' in which the power of Christianity was manifested, 'believe me for the very works' sake' (xiv. 11).[1] Of such trust the result is that 'he that believeth in me, though he die yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die': and Martha answers, 'I have believed that thou art the Christ, the Son of God' (xi. 26-27). Belief, then, generates life, and this life is in its nature divine; nay, it is the life of a son of God himself, for the Elder tells us (1 John v. 1) that 'whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten (or born) of God.' To believe that Jesus was the Messiah was, in the first place, the way of entrance into the Church. It was by this faith that the Christian was marked off not only from the Jew, but in the same manner from the Gentile. It was, in fact, a summary phrase for being a Christian. Hence it denoted all the new emotions, the new desires, the new hopes, the new aims, the new endeavours, the new outlook on the world, the new affections towards God and man, which filled the believer's soul, and constituted that fresh element of being known in the vocabulary of the early Church as 'life.' Viewed in this light the Gospel has its purpose in the production of Christian experience.[2] And the foundation of the sonship of the disciple is the Sonship of Christ. But in this solemn relation the Logos, apparently, has no place.

On two further difficulties in connexion with the divergence between the Prologue and the Gospel a few words must be said. In the first place the Logos philosophy in its Stoic form, confronted with the world's evil, could give no account of it. It provided an explanation

[1] On the nature of the 'works,' cp. Lect. V.

[2] Cp. Lect. VI.

of the cosmic order, and in alliance with current astronomy and astrology it could adapt itself to conceptions of Providence and Fate. It had a lofty ethical meaning in its challenge to men to conquer difficulty and endure adverse fortune bravely, to bear pain without flinching and meet death with dignity. But it could not account for the 'darkness' which confronted the light; it recognised no 'prince of this world' contending for mastery in human affairs; it could never describe a crime by saying of the traitor, 'Then Satan entered into him.' So Philo could not, like the author of Wisdom, attribute the origin of death to the envy of the devil (ii. 24). In the universe as he interprets it there is no hostile power with a kingdom of his own opposing the Rule of God. The Synoptic representation of the healing ministry of Jesus as an expulsion of unclean spirits is veiled in the Fourth Gospel by works of symbolic meaning, but the effect of the life and death of the Incarnate is that the 'Prince of this world will be cast out' (xii. 31). The angry Jews, however, are apparently irredeemable. They are 'out of the devil,' not out of God, and are unable consequently to hear God's words (viii. 43-47). What has become, then, of 'the light that lighteth every man'? It cannot illumine congenital incapacity.

Secondly, the function of the Logos during the activity of Jesus is rendered obscure by the addition of the endowment of the Spirit as the medium through which he is empowered to communicate truth and impose new commandments, and further by the implied contrast between his heavenly and his earthly states. The Evangelist, as is well known, does not narrate the Baptism, when (according to the oldest texts of the unction of Jesus as 'the Anointed') the Spirit 'descended *into* him' (Mark i. 10). But he relates the Baptist's testimony to the vision of this heavenly endowment. The further statement that 'it abode upon him' (i. 32) shows that this was not merely a symbolic incident marking him out as God's Chosen; the Spirit became the permanent channel of inspiration. Given without measure, it enabled him to speak the words of God (iii. 34). How was it that the

Eternal Logos needed such a helper? For ever with God in timeless communion with him, what was there that he did not know, of what could he require to be reminded? Jesus does, indeed, speak of a glory which he once possessed and will soon resume. Modern interpreters have sometimes supposed that in becoming flesh the Logos laid aside his omniscience, so that though he had made heaven and earth he grew up for thirty years ignorant who he was, till at his baptism the Holy Spirit revealed him to himself. The relinquishment of participation in the radiant life of heaven further involved—on the same line of thought—the surrender of his omnipotence, and we are accordingly told that in visiting the earth the Logos abandoned his physical attributes. Such a withdrawal, argued the late Prof. Stanton, 'would be, according to the thought of the author of the Prologue when he wrote it, impossible without reducing the Cosmos to Chaos.'[1] Yet Proclus, preaching in the great Church of St. Sophia in the fifth century, proclaimed that 'He, the same, was in his Father's bosom and in the Virgin's womb.' Current Anglican theology, however, while recognising that the metaphysical difficulties involved in his accepting even the limitations of human knowledge are insuperable, or preferring not to enquire into the cosmic functions of the Son during the Incarnation, can also emphatically affirm, 'As Word of God we believe that he created and sustains the world; the world was sustained no less during the days of his humiliation.'[2]

These difficulties are relieved by the view so impressively set forth by Dr. Stanton that the Gospel 'reflects Christological beliefs which he (the Evangelist) had held, modes of thought to which he had become accustomed, before he grasped the Logos idea and applied it to the Person of Christ.' 'This kind of use of philosophical terms by theologians and moralists,' it is shrewdly added, 'is constantly taking place. It is natural to those earnest

[1] *The Gospels as Historical Documents*, iii. p. 170.

[2] Cp. J. E. C., *The Historical Jesus and the Theological Christ* (1911), pp. 203-214.

men who are spiritual and ethical teachers rather than philosophers.' [1]

III

Let us, then, turn once more to the Evangelist's own definition of his purpose, ' that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye may have life in his name.' The essential condition of salvation is faith in Jesus as the Messiah and as God's Son. What ideas were attached to these two characters the Gospel itself discloses. On the one side he fulfilled the prophetic hopes, for Moses wrote of him, and Isaiah saw his glory ; on the other he was of heavenly origin and had descended from supernal glory. The first function linked him with Israel, for salvation, we read, ' is of the Jews ' (iv. 22) ; the second constituted him the revealer of God. The Evangelist's presentation of Jesus thus combined two sets of factors, the national and the universal ; the nature of the Son was derived from that of the Father ; in being, in word and act, he was dependent upon the infinite Source whence he came. How, then, did the Evangelist conceive of God, what had he learned out of the august fellowship which his fellow-believers enjoyed ' with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ ' ? (1 John i. 3).

It must not be forgotten that the religious life of the early Church was encompassed by a great variety of influences. The Jews brought with them their venerable Scriptures, and the Apocalyptic hopes which found their most passionate utterance in the Book of Revelation.[2] Over against this type of Messianism with its terrific pictures of cosmic violence was the Alexandrian philosophy fed from the teachings of Plato and the Stoics.

[1] *Op. cit.* 178, 179 ; see the whole discussion from p. 169. If the addition was made it may be left undecided whether it was by the hand of the Evangelist himself, or a later Redactor. Cp. the language of Dr. Garvie concerning ' the metaphysical difficulties from which Christology in its subsequent developments made ineffectual efforts to escape,' *The Beloved Disciple*, p. 9. On an Indian analogue in the teaching of the great mystic, Kabir, see J. E C., *Theism in Medieval India*, p. 467.

[2] Cp. Part I, Lectures I-VI.

There the God of Israel was universalised in terms of Hellenic thought, but at the same time was carried into abstraction beyond abstraction till he disappeared beyond all human conception in an abyss of immeasurable Being. Within the Church was the precious deposit of the teaching of Jesus which retained the impress of his own experience of the immediacy of the divine presence both in nature and the soul. But little of it reappears in the Evangelist's page ; of the symbols in which Jesus saw the constant love of a Father in heaven there is no word. There are others, of different kinds, the running water, the manna and the bread, the sheepfold and the vine, but they serve another purpose. The language sounds more like the idiom of a special mode of thought, it has sometimes even a half-scholastic air (*e.g.* v. 19-23 ; xvi. 8-11). Between the Synoptic Gospels and the Fourth lay the work of the Apostle Paul, exhibiting the effect of the first impact of Greek culture on Christian speculative activity. And in the stir and confusion caused by the decay of the old beliefs, the loss of confidence in the old rituals, came the growing influence of the mystery religions outside the Church, and the rise of the Gnostic systems with their fantastic attempts to provide mediators between heaven and earth, between God and the world. It is in the midst of this immense variety that the Evangelist urges men to accept as their Saviour one who was not only the Jews' Messiah but also the Son of God.

It is at once evident that this latter title has soared above its ancient theocratic application, or its national use. It is employed in an exalted meaning to which Paul had already pointed the way.[1] In scene after scene its significance is expounded or implied in selected incidents or formal discourse. All kinds of persons are brought into dramatic contact with the Teacher. They vary in race and character, in occupation and circumstance. Their treatment varies likewise, from the opening limitation of the Baptist's work to the witness which would awaken faith, down to the final confession of doubting Thomas which draws forth the benediction for

[1] With Rom. viii. 14 cp. viii. 3, Gal. iv. 4, Rom. i. 4, 1 Cor. xv. 28.

future generations, 'Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed.' In this series of episodes the word and work of Jesus are enveloped in a new atmosphere. Ever since the days of Plato the contrast between the world of sense as we apprehend it and the world of thought as the ideals or types of all the kinds or classes of perceptible objects were conceived by God, had entered in some form into philosophical speculation. It had taken very concrete modes in Palestinian imagination under Babylonian influence, and was applied in Alexandrian teaching to commend Genesis to Hellenic readers, and reinterpret the books of Moses to the cultivated Jew.[1] To rise by the ascent of mind into that world of archetypes and thus 'think God's thoughts after him' was the highest discipline of religion. In the briefest phrase it was 'to know God.' Those who practised virtue, says Philo, were tested by right Reason (*logos*) like coins, 'they were nourished not on earthly things but on heavenly knowledge.'[2] The same distinction is recognised in the words of Jesus to Nicodemus, 'If I told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you heavenly things'? (iii. 12). This principle, adapted to new instances, pervades the Evangelist's presentation, as the passover lamb, or Jacob's ladder, the wind, the brazen serpent, the door, the corn of wheat, and even flesh and blood, are made the symbols of unseen realities. The sphere of sense is thus at once full of infinite suggestiveness. Its visible objects become emblems of what is beyond sight, yet after all they hide more than they disclose; they draw after them the energies of vain desire but they have no permanence; they belong to the kingdom of darkness and ignorance, of the unreal and the false. 'The world passeth away, and the lust thereof.' The only real world is the world of 'heavenly things' (iii. 12), the real light, the real bread, and even the 'real God.'[3] This is the sublime being

[1] See especially the Philonic treatment in the tractates on the *Creation of the World*, and the *Allegories of the Sacred Laws*, i. 3.

[2] *Allegories*, iii. 58; Cohn, i. p. 150, § 168.

[3] Cp. 1 Thess. i. 9, and *ante*, p. 320.

known as 'the Father' who is revealed by his Son. What aspects, then, of his nature are rendered apprehensible by Jesus? Let it be noted that the earlier exhortation (Mark xi. 22), 'Have faith in God,' becomes in the Fourth Gospel, 'Believe in me.'

The first characteristic of God is contained in the immortal definition 'God is spirit,' and the consequent declaration of the nature of 'real' worship. The Greek order of the words gives to the predicate 'spirit' especial emphasis (as in i. 1), which is further impaired by the English rendering 'a spirit,' as if God were one of a class or group, as when the terrified disciples, frightened at the sudden appearance of Jesus in their midst after his death, supposed that they saw a spirit (Luke xxiv. 37).[1] The theology of Israel had never made this declaration formally, though Isaiah had approached it, 'The Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses are flesh and not spirit' (xxxi. 3), and the Psalmist who exclaimed, 'Whither shall I flee from thy spirit?' had come nearer still. The usual phrase implied that 'the spirit of Yahweh' was a mode of his activity, a consecrating energy in some way operating beyond him (*e.g.* Isaiah xi. 2, lxi. 1). More intimately inherent in him it described what in a man would be denominated his 'mind,' and was accordingly so rendered by the Greek translators (Isaiah xl. 13). But no Jew had yet said, 'God is spirit.' The Alexandrian philosophy, however, was founded on the contrast between flesh and spirit; that God was Mind had been the higher religious faith since the days of Anaxagoras; the Latin moralist sang, 'If God is mind (*animus*) as the hymns aver'; and the Stoics definitely affirmed that 'God is spirit pervading the whole world.'[2]

'Spirit' in its higher sense has thus no shape. It is not contained in anything, and transcends all space. It is similarly independent of time; in other words, it is eternal; no changes can affect it. Without form it

[1] Cp. Ignatius, *Smyrn.* iii.

[2] *Catonis Distich.* (Wetstein); *Plac.* i. 7, 33 (Dox. 305), in Ritter and Preller[8] § 494 (kindly sent me by Mr. Hight). Greek writers (*e.g.* in the *Hermetica*) prefer *nous*.

cannot be imagined or pictured, and God is therefore declared to be invisible (i. 18, vi. 46 ; 1 John iv. 12). The language of sense is indeed employed, when Jesus warns the Jews, ' Ye have neither heard his voice at any time nor seen his form, ye have not his *logos* abiding in you ' (v. 37). The reference to the past suggests the stories of theophany in the Old Testament. But an examination of the use of the five Greek verbs translated ' see ' (or sometimes ' behold ') may perhaps justify the inference that behind any historical application lies the Platonic sense of ' form,' the eternal type or idea, belonging to the world of the ' heavenlies ' (iii. 12). There was the realm of unseen realities, the ultimate objects of intellectual apprehension, the goal of the mind ascending to the topmost heights of philosophical abstraction. Such a Deity was of necessity invisible. He could only be known by revelation. Using the term applied to the confused utterances interpreted by the priests at shrines of oracles, the Prologue tells us that the Only Son has declared him. Jesus' own words are more definite : ' He that hath seen me hath seen the Father ' (xiv. 9). How could the invisible God be thus displayed in a human person ?

The Gospel lays emphatic stress upon the signs wrought by Jesus.[1] They were the manifestations of power. But they were not self-wrought. ' I can of myself do nothing,' ' The Father abiding in me doeth his works ' (v. 30, xiv. 10).[2] God is thus the source of a perpetual activity. Over against the scriptural presentation of the divine rest on the seventh day, after six days of creative toil, he is depicted as unceasing energy. When Jesus is charged in the Synoptics with violating the Sabbath by an act of beneficence, he replies, ' Why, you do the same thing yourselves for your own animals when you lead ox or ass to watering.' ' Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or harm ? ' ' If a sheep fall into a pit will you not pull it out ? How much more valuable is a man than a

[1] See Lect. V. p. 383.

[2] This language does not seem wholly consistent with the view that the Son was endowed with ' life in himself ' (v. 26) which he can impart to whomsoever he pleases (v. 21). Cp. Lect. VI. p. 402.

sheep!' That is the argument of the 'earthly things' in the best form, an appeal to human reason and practice. The Fourth Gospel carries up the case to the 'heavenly things.' 'My Father worketh up to now, and I work' (v. 17). This was a recognised metaphysical principle. 'What is the mark of true piety?' asks King Ptolemy of one of the seventy translators of the Scriptures. 'To perceive that God constantly works in the universe, and knows all things,' is the reply.[1] 'God never ceases creating,' says Philo. Cicero recognises it as a philosophical truth that God is ever carrying on something.[2] The Hermetic teachers repeat it again and again. 'It is his work to be a Father.' 'If he ceases to do his work, he is no longer God.' 'He is rightly named God by reason of his power, and Maker by reason of the work he does; and Father by reason of his goodness.'[3] God is thus the seat of all might; the forces operating in the universe are his volitions; and his nature is incessant self-communication. He is no abstract Monad, remote and inaccessible, indifferent and self-contained. He is for ever imparting himself to the world, from hour to hour its marvellous process is sustained by him. No *logos* is called in here to act as his agent in the cosmos. His will speeds on its way directly, and empowers Jesus to similar immediate action. No illustrations of the divine benevolence such as God's equal bounty in the sunshine and the rain, or his provision of beauty for the lilies and food for man, fall from the Teacher's lips. The guarantee of his continued graciousness is expressed in one word. Not only is he the Real God, he is also the True.[4] Above the simple affirmation of his existence is his character. 'He that sent me is *alēthēs*' (viii. 26), the veracious or faithful, the trustworthy, the steadfast, the unchanging, whose purpose of good is ever sure.

[1] *Letter of Aristeas*, 210; see Canon Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the O.T.* (1913), ii. p. 113.

[2] *Allegories of the Laws*, i. 7 (Cohn, i. p. 65). Cicero, *De Offic.* iii. 28 (W. Bauer).

[3] v. 6, cp. ii. 17; xi. 12b, 14; xiv. 4.

[4] *Alethinos and Alēthēs*, cp. *ante*, p. 320.

The contents of this character are most clearly indicated in the First Letter. In the Gospel God is, as it were, in the background. He is the Father, and the Evangelist is telling the story of the Son, and portraying his relationship to his unseen Sire. The Letter is concerned with the contemporary experience of a particular group of believers. So obscure is the doctrine of the Persons, so uncertain their distinction, Father and Son are so blended in the inner life of the disciple, that it is sometimes doubtful to which concept the writer refers.[1] In the opening verses the 'Word of life' is probably to be identified not with the creative Logos of the Prologue, but with the word which gives life so that (as Jesus says) 'whoever keeps it shall never taste of death' (viii. 52). Such a word is the generalised expression of all the words (*rhēmata*) which he declares to be 'spirit and life' (vi. 63). This word (heard from the Father so that it is God's word as well as Christ's) is realised in Jesus. Its life-giving power is manifested symbolically in him. It is not a medium of communication between Jesus and the Father, and it disappears from the Letter directly, as the Elder is not concerned with the teaching of Jesus but immediately with God as its source. The attributes of Life and Light ascribed to the Logos in the Prologue are here discerned in God, who is declared himself to be 'light' (i. 5). Darkness there is, as a practical fact enveloping human conduct, but it is passing away, for the Real Light is already shining (ii. 8). Similarly God is the spring of life: 'We are in him that is Real . . . this is the Real God and eternal life' (v. 20). For the believer the resurrection has already taken place: 'We know that we have passed out of death into life because we love the brethren' (iii. 14). The reason is that God is love; love is the principle of union with him; 'God is love, and he that abideth in love abideth in God, and God in him' (iv. 16). This is the translation into Johannine speech of the impassioned experience of Paul, who defies the world and all its powers to separate him

[1] The difference in nomenclature is not without significance. In the Gospel the Father is mentioned 119 times, and called God 79. In the letter the proportion is changed, Father 12, and God 64.

from the love of God in Christ (Rom. viii. 38, 39). But love is no attribute of the Greek Logos. That started from what we should call the scientific side. It was the intellectual expression of the order and harmony of the universe, the Reason that lay behind Nature. To the Greek this was more prominent than the ethical character of God which was of the utmost importance to the Jew. That moral quality of faithfulness expressed in the epithet 'True' involved his righteousness. It gave to the utterance of Jesus its cleansing power (xv. 3), and secured forgiveness for the penitent sinner (1 John i. 9).

These, then, Spirit, Power, Light, Love, Righteousness, make up the fundamental conception of God, and are to be revealed in the Son. Subject to the limitations of his humanity they will be the significant elements of his person also, save for one important difference. In the Father they are intrinsic, original, essential. They belong to him as God, self-subsistent and eternal. In the Son they are all derivative. They are conferred upon him as gifts from the Father. For every power of speech or act he is dependent on the heavenly source of all graces and potencies of spirit. And the aim of the Gospel is to portray this self-disclosure of the Infinite in the life of a historic person, the revealer of the purpose of God for the world. He is subject to the mortality of flesh, but at the same time he is of celestial origin, and transcends the apparent limitations of a human being. It is in this double character that Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Joseph (i. 45), is also the Messiah, Son of God.[1]

IV

Whatever was the origin of the title 'Son of God' as applied to the Messiah, it is plain that it was fully established in the Christian community in the time of the Apostle Paul. The representations of its use in the questions addressed to Jesus by the high priest at the trial (Mark xiv. 61; Luke xxii. 70) seem substantially trustworthy, and imply that it was already a recognised

[1] For a list of titles and epithets see note at the end of this lecture.

title in the Sanhedrin. Its occurrence in Matt. xvi. 16, though apparently added by an expander (cp. Mark viii. 29; Luke ix. 20), is doubtless due to a born Jew, as the epithet 'living God' implies. It is there an official not a metaphysical or mystical title. It has its roots in the distant past when Israel could be called 'Yahweh's first-born Son' (Exod. iv. 22; cp. Wisdom xviii. 13), and the king who came to be his representative was designated in exalted religious language 'Yahweh's Son' (2 Sam. vii. 14; Ps. lxxxix. 26, 27). Pointed expression was given to this filial relation in the language of Ps. ii. 7, where the accession of the ideal 'Anointed' to universal sovereignty on Yahweh's holy hill is announced in terms of generation, 'Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee'—a declaration of which the early Church was not slow to make use. In the language of Paul the conception acquired a much higher meaning, as Christ was called 'the First-born of all creation,' the Image of God, and the Son of his love (Col. i. 13-15).

Two other aspects of the character of the Messiah in the Synoptic tradition reappear in the Fourth Gospel. On his entry into Jerusalem with his followers he had been hailed as the inaugurator of a new Davidic kingdom, and he was executed as King of the Jews. The term on the lips of Jesus in which his reporters understand him to express his Messianic function was 'Son of Man.' All three titles are combined in the colloquy with Nathanael, his fifth disciple, who addresses him as Son of God and King of Israel, to which he responds as 'Son of Man' (i. 49-51).

The idea of a national sovereignty had long been cherished in many hearts as the Pharisaic Psalms of Solomon suffice to prove (xvii. 23 ff.), but the reports of the Teacher's parables of the associated Kingdom of God by the earlier Evangelists do not formally connect him with it in the character of its head.[1] But a remarkable incident is mentioned by the Fourth after the feeding of the multitude in the wilderness. The impulse arose among them to capture his person and forcibly proclaim him king

[1] Cp., however, the language of Luke xxii. 29, 30.

(vi. 15). Does this rest on any actual tradition, or is it mentioned as an alternative explanation of his retirement on to the hills for solitary prayer (Mark vi. 46)? It has no parallel elsewhere. In the eager and excited crowd such a movement might quickly rouse enthusiasm. Yet in the silence of the simpler narratives it seems more likely that it was intended as a hint of the popular misunderstanding of the Messianic character of Jesus.[1] True, this royal dignity as the prophetic Peace-maker (Zech. ix. 9, 10) is deliberately assumed (xii. 13-15) at his entry into Jerusalem; and in the private examination by Pilate he implicitly accepts the regal dignity, though he affirms that his kingdom is not of this world. As with other symbols, it can only be realised 'in spirit.'

More significant is the use of the title Son of Man. With a glance at the current eschatology (v. 27) he is invested with the judicial function portrayed in Matt. xxv, though from another point of view he declares that he has not come to judge the world but to save it (iii. 17; xii. 47).[2] A trace of the older thought survives in the reference to 'the wrath of God' (iii. 36). The Synoptic traditions of the passion of the Son of Man are transformed into references to his approaching glorification (iii. 14, viii. 28, xii. 23, 34, xiii. 31). Another group carries it into the upper sphere. When Nathanael has saluted him as Son of God and King of Israel, Jesus replies (in a characteristic formula twenty-five times repeated):

'Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye shall see the heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.'

This is not an address to Nathanael alone. Its plural form shows that it is a promise to all believers. The

[1] It may be an intrusion from some other source. Jesus is said to go up 'again' into the mountain. But he was there from the beginning, when (as in Matt. v. 1) he sat down with his disciples. He has just been recognised as 'the Prophet' (cp. i. 21, vii. 40), whether referring to the application of Deut. xviii. 15 as in Acts iii. 22, vii. 37, must remain uncertain—in any case a different character.

[2] Cp. Lect. VI. p. 402.

vision of the opening heaven, once seen by Jesus, shall be repeated in the fellowship of the Church. The Son of Man is the archetype, the 'man from heaven' of Paul, and his continued communion with the Father is expressed by the angels which ascend and descend between them in constant intercourse of mutual knowledge, filial obedience, divine grace and love.[1] This celestial being speaks to Nicodemus of his own ascension, again in the language of subsequent Church-life, 'magnificently careless of historical anachronisms,' with the remarkable addition in some texts, 'The Son of Man who is in heaven' (iii. 12, 13). The phrase caused the Syriac translators much perplexity, so that one correction ran 'from heaven,' and another 'was in heaven,' with a freedom no longer regarded as legitimate. It is the same ascended Son of Man whose flesh must be eaten by whoever would have eternal life (vi. 53). This is no invitation to anthropophagy. In language of mystery the believers are summoned to communion with the risen Christ whose words quicken because they are really spirit (vi. 63).[2] Here is a different conception of the Messiah's nature and work altogether, which only finds its explanation in connexion with his exalted being as Son of God. What, then, were the elements of that conception?

It was not in Israel only that this term had been already employed. The oriental idea of the divinity which hedged a king led the court scribes of Egypt as early as 2750 B.C. to employ the title 'Son of Rê' (the sun).[3] The later Ptolemies and the sovereigns of the East claimed similar divine honours, and the Seleucidae put

[1] The legend of Jacob's dream had been applied by Philo to the divine assistance of God's own 'words' to lovers of virtue, *On Dreams*, i. 12, and 21-22; Cohn-Wendland, iii. pp. 219, 232 f. It may take the place of the angelic ministrations of Mark i. 19. The figure of the Son of Man cannot be easily combined with the Logos of the Prologue.

[2] On this discourse see Lect. VI. p. 424 ff.

[3] Breasted, *Religion in Ancient Egypt* (1912), p. 15. Cp. Prof. Flinders Petrie, *History of Egypt*, vol. iii. p. 56 f., poem of the campaign of Rameses the Great against the Khetas:

> 'What is in thy heart, my father Amen?
> Does a father ignore the face of a son?' Amen replies,
> 'I am with thee, I am thy Father.'

the title 'God' upon their coins. The town council of Ephesus in a public inscription described Julius Cæsar, who was then Dictator, as 'the God made manifest, offspring of Ares and Aphrodite, and common saviour of human life.'[1] Inscriptions from other cities of Asia Minor, Halicarnassus and Priene, dated by the historian Mommsen in the years 11 or 9 B.C., celebrate the birthday of Augustus on 23rd September: 'The birthday of the God is become the beginning of glad tidings (Greek gospels) through him to the world.' He is designated 'the Saviour of the whole human race'; he is the beginning of life and the end of sorrow that man was ever born; he has been sent by Providence to put an end to war, and peace prevails on earth and sea. In Egyptian style he was called 'God out of God,' and 'Zeus out of Father Zeus.'[2] Here are the antecedents of language which afterwards passed into Christian usage. If the Cæsar might be called 'Son of God,' so also might the righteous man (Wisdom ii. 18) or, in the view of Epictetus, the wise man (i. 9, 6). From this it was no great step for wandering teachers to be greeted as divine or even to profess themselves to have come down from heaven. The philosophic missionary Apollonius told the Roman Tigellinus that his predictions were due to the wisdom which God revealed to wise men, and was asked by the Emperor Domitian, 'Why is it that men call you a God?'[3] Simon the Mage gave out that he was the Power of God (Acts viii. 10), and another Samaritan, Dositheus, announced himself as Son of God. This title was also adopted by Simon (according to a later statement) with the additional declaration that he had come down from heaven.[4] Celsus complained of enthusiasts in Palestine and Phœnicia who uttered prophecies of various kinds in temples and cities and even among the troops, declaring 'I am God' or 'God's son,' 'The world is perishing and

[1] Deissmann, *Light from the East*, p. 348.

[2] Hiller von Gaertringen, *Inschriften von Priene* (1906), p. 80, No. 105; Wendland in *Z.N.T.W.* 1904, p. 343.

[3] *Life*, iv. 44; viii. 5. Cp. *ante*, p. 200.

[4] Wetter, *Der Sohn Gottes* (1916), p. 83, *Mart. Pet. et Paul*, 15.

I purpose to save you,' amid incoherent cries of emotional excitement.[1] It was in the midst of such varieties of use that the Jewish Messiah received the same title, and the Fourth Evangelist lifted it above all current applications by giving it the loftiest meaning. In doing so he advanced beyond the conception of the Apostle Paul, and undertook to show how the transcendent Son of God had come in the flesh to impart to the world the knowledge of the Father. And just as the Apostle had affirmed that no one could call Jesus 'Lord' without Holy Spirit, so the Elder asserts that only a spirit that was 'out of God' could acknowledge that the Son had submitted himself to actual birth and death as man (1 John iv. 2).

Such a purpose might be accomplished in either of two ways. The Evangelist might start from the Synoptic tradition, note how it had been remodelled, and leave his readers to divine the cause. There are illustrations of this method in the Baptist's testimony, in the accounts of the feeding of the multitude or the crucifixion. Or he might take the determining ideas on the divine side, and show how heavenly things could be exhibited in an earthly life. The words and works ascribed to Jesus throughout imply his choice of the latter course, and this is further emphasized by attaching the Prologue to the beginning of the narrative. The order of thought there indicated is from the superhuman to the human, from the eternal to the scenes of time. In this method the author really ranges himself with the Gnostics, so as to present a true *gnosis* to rebut the false. Hence it is that so much emphasis is devoted to the claims of Jesus in controversy with the Jews, in contrast with the prophetic preaching of the Kingdom of God in the earlier Gospels.

In the language addressed to Jesus by Nathanael and Martha there are echoes of Jewish Messianism, but the main aspects of his personality are transcendental. His

[1] Origen, *Contra Cels.* vi. 11 ; vii. 9. The word *pais* may mean Son or Servant as in Acts iii. 13, etc. Cp. the similar title 'Son of God' (Syriac) on the graves of priests of the Syrian deity known as Jupiter Dolichenus, described by Dr. Rendel Harris, in the 'Wellhausen-Heft,' *Z.N.T.W.* 1914, p. 114.

critics complain that he makes God his own Father (v. 18) ; so Paul had described him as God's own Son (Rom. viii. 3). He belongs to the upper world (iii. 31) ; he has come forth out of God (viii. 42). As such his nature is essentially spirit, and he shares many of the attributes of the divine existence. The relation of Father and Son necessarily implied some kind of priority and sequence. But no date is offered for his origin, nor is any mode specified for the mysterious act by which the Father gave him ' life in himself ' (v. 26). It is enough that he is endowed with the same timeless being, and can arouse the anger of the Jews by the startling declaration, ' Before Abraham came, I am ' (viii. 58).[1] It is the Greek equivalent of the ancient prophetic affirmation, ' Ye are my witnesses, saith Yahweh, . . . that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he,' [2] the affirmation of the Eternal. Such absolute character enables him to vanish from his assailants (viii. 59 ; xii. 36), and elude all capture (x. 39), just as when he enters the boat upon the raging waters it is ' immediately at the land whither they were going ' (vi. 21). Yet in spite of this gift of self-subsistence and superiority to mortal conditions, he must pray to be reinstated in the glory which he had with the Father before the world was (xvii. 5), he cannot claim it as a right. The reason is that even in the possession of ' life in himself,' he is still dependent for everything upon the Father. ' I live,' he says, ' because of the Father ' (vi. 57) ; where the Greek preposition covers two possibilities, ' for the sake of the Father,' to carry out his purpose, or, preferably (as the subsequent clause shows) ' by means of the Father,' as the source or ground of life, for he in turn will become a channel of life to those who ' eat ' him. All his activity, therefore, is derived, and his appearance upon earth is prescribed for him, not undertaken of his own motion. He has come down from heaven (vi. 38), but it is not to do his own will, but the will of him that

[1] The contrast implied in the Greek verbs is difficult to express in English. Compare i. 6, where John the Baptist ' came ' while the Logos ' was.'

[2] Isaiah xliii. 10. Here are already in anticipation the words of later Johannine speech, ' witness,' ' know,' ' believe.'

sent him. The constant references to this mission[1] emphasize his own statement, 'I am not come of myself.' It is noteworthy that the love of the world which prompts the Father to send him (iii. 16, 17) is never ascribed to him. The incarnation is due to his obedience; he does not set out of his own motion 'to seek and to save the lost.' The believer's attention is concentrated on his fidelity to the work given him to do, till he can say, 'It is finished' (xix. 30; cp. xvii. 4). It was, indeed, great and glorious, so that to achieve it was to be full of joy; but it was a joy that rose out of an unbroken relation to the Father, just as that which he promises to the disciples is conditioned by their faithfulness to himself (xv. 10, 11; xvii. 13). The 'joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth' finds no echo upon earth.

For the accomplishment of this work the Son of Man, host at the Messianic feast, was 'sealed' (vi. 27). The figure implies more than ordinary ownership or even a guarantee of protection. It is the symbol of dedication to a function—the dispensation of the meat which abideth to eternal life—and covers the equipment needful for the task. The endowment includes the whole purpose of salvation. It carries with it the gift of 'all things' into his hand (iii. 35; xiii. 3),[2] all spiritual energies out of the divine sphere that might be required for those whom the Father would draw to Christ, and all providential opportunities in the human sphere. It included the authority of judgment (v. 27), because he was the Son of Man, another glance at Jewish Messianism. But the 'gift of all things' might be understood to comprise much more. There is the whole field of nature, the daily maintenance of the heavens and the earth, which, in the philosophy of the Prologue, owed their origin to the Logos. Those who view the Prologue as an addition to the original narrative

[1] It is expressed by two verbs both meaning 'send,' used apparently indifferently, *e.g.* one in vi. 29, 57, the other in vi. 38, 39, 44. As both occur in the short compass of xx. 21, it does not appear possible to distinguish between them, though 6 occurrences of *apostello* in xvii. where *pempo* is not employed deserve attention. Totals, *apostello* (18), *pempo* (31). Cp. p. 224.

[2] Cp. Matt. xi. 27; *ante* p. 234.

need not look to it to define the scope of the divine donation. The Gospel itself must explain itself; and the picture of the earthly career of the Son of God, while it shows him superior to the conditions of humanity, nowhere implies that he was making the sun rise or clothing the lilies as they grew.

The object of the Incarnation is the communication of eternal life; and this is primarily effected by awakening men's apprehension of the truth. The Father is, of course, the source of all truth, his word is truth (xvii. 17). He who would show the Father to others must first have known him himself. The Son is united to the Father in mutual knowledge (x. 15), he is in full possession of his saving purpose, and can identify himself with it so completely that he can say, 'I am the Truth' (xiv. 6).[1] Yet he can speak nothing of himself (xiv. 10), 'As the Father taught me, I speak these things' (viii. 28); like an ancient prophet he is the mouthpiece of a higher will. His own share in the process of revelation is simply to keep nothing back, to transmit everything that he receives, 'All that I have heard from my Father I have made known unto you' (xv. 15). As he knows the secrets of eternal life, he shares the divine knowledge of what was in man (ii. 25; cp. Acts i. 24, xv. 8). He names Simon by his new title at the outset (i. 42), recognises Nathanael's guilelessness, apprehends the past history of the Samaritan woman, tells the nobleman from Capernaum that his son is cured, sees through his opponents' lack of the love of God, and in each successive scene is absolute master of the situation. The destined end of his career is full in view from the beginning; he knows the 'hour,' and what being 'uplifted' means (iii. 14); and if it seemed that he had blundered in admitting a traitor among the Twelve, the believer is told that he had foreseen it all along (vi. 70, 71). The perspectives of the future are all open to his vision. He is not concerned with the fate of temple or city; he beholds the expansion of the Church, the success of the Christian missions, the

[1] Isis also says, 'I am the truth,' but in a different context; cp. Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East*, p. 139.

development of teaching, the victory over darkness and falsehood, the conquest of the world. So he moves majestically among his adversaries, till in the intimacy of the last night the disciples are convinced of his omniscience, 'Now know we that thou knowest all things' (xvi. 30).

The physical symbol of this is light, and its effect is the awakening of life. While John the Baptist is only a lamp (v. 35), light comes into the world in the person of the Son (iii. 19). The declaration 'I am the light of the world' is only another mode of saying 'I am the truth.' The symbolism of light and darkness had long been familiar to Jewish piety. Israel had been given of old for a light of the Gentiles (Isai. xlii. 6). 'Choose for yourselves,' said Levi, 'either the light or the darkness, either the law of the Lord or the works of Beliar.' The priest who should become as a Son to the Most High should light up the light of knowledge in Israel, until the Lord should visit all the Gentiles in his tender mercies for ever.[1] So Jesus had told his disciples that they were the light of the world (Matt. v. 14), and now in a more exalted sense that title is ascribed to him (viii. 12). It is justified (ix. 5) as he fulfils ancient prophecy by opening the eyes of a blind man, but the power is not his own, it is the Father dwelling in him who does his works (xiv. 10), and thus the light which shines in him is God's. The fullest manifestation of this divine energy is the gift of life imparted to whom he will (v. 20 f.). It is derived from the original bestowal of self-subsistent life from the Father to the Son. Traditional eschatology is thrown aside. The judgment is no future event; the hour has arrived with the advent of one who is both Son of God and Son of Man; his voice calls forth the dead, and they that hear shall live.[2] The risen Lazarus illustrates this exalted function. Sent by the living Father, and himself living through him, Jesus can say of himself, 'I am the resurrection and the life.' He will, indeed, return to the

[1] Testaments, 'Levi' xix. 1, iv. 2-4. Cp. 'Zeb.' ix. 8, 'There shall arise the Lord himself, the light of righteousness.'

[2] v. 25. On the whole passage cp. Lect. VI, p. 444.

heavenly world, and his disciples will see him no more; but they will not be bereft of the Truth. He will send the Advocate who, like himself, will only speak what he hears, 'he shall take of mine and shall declare it unto you,' and thus the saving work will be continued (xvi. 13-15).

Finally, as the Son's mission is the proof of the Father's love for the world, love is also the key to its fulfilment. On the part of the Father to the Son it is shown in the confidence with which all truth, power, opportunity, are bestowed upon him, all works are shown to him, without reserve. On the part of the Son to the Father it is manifested first in the completeness of his obedience to the command laid upon him (xiv. 31), next in the union of affection into which the disciples are admitted. For them he willingly lays down his life; for them he prays that his joy may be fulfilled in themselves. Will his love ever pierce the darkness which envelops those who will not walk in the light? The new commandment does not include 'enemies.' The world will still hate, though he has come to save it (xv. 18). Yet the door of hope is not altogether closed. He will resume the glory which he had with the Father before the world was. That unity which was so close that though the Father was greater than himself (xiv. 28), he could still say 'He that hath seen me hath seen the Father' (xiv. 9), 'I and the Father are one' (x. 30), should at last include the believers —'That they all may be one, even as thou, Father, in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us' (xvii. 21), and this wondrous spectacle would win the world to faith.[1] Ultimately dependent on the Father, and in that sense subordinate to him, as Saviour and Judge he rises into equality beside him in the worship of the Church, 'that all men may honour the Son even as they honour the Father' (v. 23).

[1] On the union of Father and Son in Mithraism and Hellenistic theology cp. Dieterich, *Mithras-Liturgie*, pp. 68, 156; and on mutual knowledge and identity between worshipper and Deity see examples in Angus, *The Mystery Religions and Christianity* (1925), p. 110 f.

NOTE TO LECT. IV

Titles and Descriptive Epithets

The Logos, i. 14.
The Only Son, i. 18; iii. 16, 18.
The Lamb of God, i. 29, 36.
The Son of God, i. 34, 49; v. 25; (ix. 35); x. 36; xi. 4, 27; xx. 31.
Rabbi, Teacher, i. 38; iii. 2; vi. 25; xi. 28; xiii. 13, 14 (Teacher and Lord). Lord (in address), vi. 34, 68; xiii. 9.
The Messiah (Christ), i. 41; iv. 29; vii. 26; xi. 27; xvii. 3 (as part of his name); xx. 31.
Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Joseph, i. 45.
The King of Israel, i. 49; xii. 13.
The Son of Man, i. 51; iii. 13, 14; v. 27; vi. 27, 53, 62; viii. 28; (ix. 35); xii. 23, 34; xiii. 31.
The Son, iii. 17, 35, 36 (2); v. 19 (2), 20, 21, 22, 23 (2), 26; vi. 40; viii. 35, 36; xiv. 13; xvii. 1 (2).
The Lord, iv. 1; vi. 23; xi. 2; xx. 18, 20, 25, cp. 28; xxi. 7, 12.
The Saviour of the World, iv. 42.
The Prophet, vi. 14.
The Bread of Life, vi. 35.
The Holy One of God, vi. 69.
The Light of the World, viii. 12; ix. 5.
The Door, x. 7, 9.
The Good Shepherd, x. 11, 14.
The Resurrection and the Life, xi. 25.
The Way, the Truth, and the Life, xiv. 6.
The True Vine, xv. 1.
Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews, xix. 19.

LECTURE V

THE MINISTRY

The Fourth Gospel, its author tells us, was written with a special purpose, to display the nature of Jesus in two aspects. In relation to Israel he is to be recognised as the Messiah. In relation to humanity and the world he is to be known as Son of God. He has a national aspect in the first character, and a universal aspect in the second, but the second immeasurably transcends the first. The Evangelist belongs to a community—he is perhaps its head—animated by a common faith, sharing a common knowledge, pervaded by a common life. These gifts are not possessed by all in equal degrees. He seeks to strengthen that faith, to illuminate that knowledge, to quicken that life among believers, and to awaken belief among the indifferent or the hostile in society around. There were the 'little children,' the young disciples who had just entered the ranks with sins forgiven; there were others who had been 'so long time' in the Fellowship and were still longing to be 'shown the Father.' On some the light had only just dawned; for others though noonday had arrived it was still clouded; and beyond lay the great mass of the world all wrapped in gloom where men walked not knowing whither they went.

To all these the Son of God offers the gift of life, to Israel first as its Anointed King, and then to all of every race who had eyes to see and minds to know and hearts to love. The Revealer of this secret appears on the scene as a man. The life which he seeks to impart must be exhibited in his own person. He is its channel as it issues from the 'fountain of life,' so that he could say,

'Salvation is of the Jews' (iv. 22), at the same time that the Samaritans recognised him as the Saviour of the world. His two instruments are action and speech; and he must be portrayed in the midst of various types, believers and disbelievers, Jews and non-Jews, chosen disciples, superior critics and bitter antagonists, the leaders of national religion and the representative of imperial Rome. He is the hero of an immense spiritual enterprise, the salvation of the world. Moreover, the whole manifestation must be adapted to a tradition already well known, though capable of modification to suit the writer's aim. It must be planted in localities already fixed; it must introduce personalities—the Baptist, Peter, Andrew, Philip, Thomas—once familiar; it must describe unforgettable proceedings like the purging of the temple or the entry into Jerusalem amid a joyous crowd; and it must end with the Cross and appearances of the risen Lord. Earlier figures might be recast for new parts, like the Baptist whose function was not to warn his countrymen of impending judgment but to make his successor 'manifest' to Israel. And the career thus apparently limited in scope must be worked into the plot of a great world-drama. Compared with the Apocalypse the Fourth Gospel is very differently staged. It is played on an extremely limited scale; no armies issue from heaven to secure victory for the Son of God; but the plot is essentially the same; the two great protagonists encounter each other unseen; the vast world-issue is accomplished without the aid of thunders and earthquakes; the Prince of evil must be overcome. He will be cast out (xii. 31).[1] No burning lake receives him; he passes into a nameless obscurity and is heard of no more. His power is broken; the future is secure; 'the darkness is past, the true light already shines.'

The Fourth Gospel has been rightly called a Book of Devotion. But it is also a work of Imagination. It is the

[1] The familiar term in the Synoptic stories of cures of the 'possessed.' He is, however, still active, xiii. 2, 27, and the Evangelist attributes the treachery of Judas to his 'entry,' cp. Luke xxii. 3, of which Mark and Matt. say nothing.

product of a mystic, not a historian. Under the form of narrative it opens the vision of 'heavenly things.' The imagination does not indeed always maintain itself at the same exalted level. In the bitterness of racial conflict it flags and droops, for its wing is broken. But in the midst of the Fellowship it renews its flight, and soars once more above the conflicts of time into the harmonies of eternity, 'Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.' [1]

I

The Son of God presents himself to the Jews at Jerusalem as 'a man' (viii. 40) who told them the truth which he heard from God. The Prologue affirms that 'the Logos became flesh.' He is accepted in the character of Messiah by the first disciples as 'Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Joseph' (i. 45). The Jews in the synagogue at Capernaum know his father and mother (vi. 42), and are consequently puzzled by his saying that he had come down out of heaven. The problem of his personality was unintelligible, and the Gospel as it stands contains elements apparently irreconcilable. It seems to be founded in the main on the contrast between flesh and spirit, long familiar to Greek philosophy where the higher term was usually named *nous* or 'mind.' Between the actual bodily person which could be moved and guided by what early Hindu teachers called the 'puller-within,' and the reason which was the seat of ultimate control, lay a region of experience as the senses poured in their impressions for the use of the directing mind. This element of sensation

[1] The reader will find this aspect of the Gospel powerfully described by Miss Underhill in *The Mystic Way* (1913), chap. iv. 'It, more than any other writing in the New Testament, bears the mark of prophetic inspiration: but the many proved inaccuracies and impossibilities of its narratives, the wide difference between its portrait of Jesus and that given by the Synoptics, the curiously unearthly atmosphere which pervades it, all tend to contradict the tradition that it was composed by a personal friend of the historic Christ' (p. 217). As long as the Gospel is regarded as the chief authority for dogmatic Christology and ecclesiastical exclusiveness, it is still necessary to ask whether its report of the words and deeds of Jesus can be accepted as historically true.

was linked with the body and its organic life; it was obviously shared by the animals companioning with man, and went by the name of *psychê*. But the term was extended till it included what we often designate as 'soul,' with inconvenient results, as any one may see who will look at the Revisers' margin on Mark viii. 35-37. Hebrew analysis, which had begun by describing Yahweh as blowing into the nostrils of the first man the breath of life (Gen. ii. 7), learned to interpret that breath as spirit (cp. Isai. xxxi. 3), and spirit was in later days practically equivalent in its ordinary use to the Greek *nous*.[1] How, then, did an early reader of the Prologue understand the declaration 'the Logos became flesh?' 'In the sphere of Christology,' Canon Raven tells us, 'there was as yet hardly a problem:'[2]

'Man possessed in common with the animals a body and an animating soul, endowed with instincts and sense-perceptions: he differed from them in having also the divine faculty of reason (τὸ λογικόν) which gave him knowledge of reality and of God. That was common ground to the Christian philosopher and his opponents. So long as Christ was regarded as the Logos, it was obvious that His Incarnation could consist only of the assumption of flesh and animating soul, for He was Himself the true Reason, the fulness of that which men possessed in part, the original or archetype of which they were imperfect copies.'

This view, or an equivalent, Canon Raven traces through a long series of writers from Justin Martyr, into the early works of Athanasius and the writings of contemporaries (successors may be left out of count) till it became the heresy of Apollinarius, bishop of Laodicea.[3] Broadly speaking that was to the effect that in Christ the Logos took the place of human mind or reason. His self-conscious life was entirely divine. Apollinarius was simply 'the boldest and most logical exponent of a doctrine that can be traced back at least to Justin Martyr

[1] The language of the Apostle Paul is not precise, but compare 'spirit' (1 Cor. ii. 11) and 'mind' (Rom. vii. 25).

[2] *Apollinarianism* (1923), p. 17.

[3] The dates of his life are uncertain; birth between 312 and 315; death before 392.

and is characteristic of the greatest saints and thinkers of the early church.' [1] All were agreed that Christ had come in the flesh. What other elements, then, does the Gospel mention? The term *psychê* is used to describe the life which the Good Shepherd or Jesus himself lays down for the sheep (x. 11, 15), just as he tells the disciples after the farewell supper that he gives them the greatest proof of friendship by laying down his life for them (xv. 13). But the *psychê* is also the organ of feeling. Very significant is the passage in xii. 27. The joyous entry into Jerusalem is over; he has been acclaimed by the enthusiastic crowd as King of Israel. At this juncture certain Greeks appear on the scene desiring to see him, and they apply to Philip who tells Andrew, and the two apostles—bearers of Greek names—carry the request to Jesus. Whether he received the Greeks, or, if so, what he said to them, we are not informed. They are the representatives of the world beyond Israel, waiting to be saved. But that world can only be reached when Jesus is freed from a human body which is limited to Galilee or Jerusalem. The petition suddenly confronts him with the hour of death. True, that hour has been in view (as we shall see) since the beginning; it is also in one sense an hour of glorification. But the cross which exalts him must be reached through treachery and desertion, and is full of pain. The whole prospect of ignominy and suffering is suddenly unfolded before him, and the agony of Gethsemane is anticipated. *Then* the majestic presence of the victor over the world will overawe the cohort sent to arrest him, and fling the Roman soldiers to the ground. *Now* the irrepressible cry breaks forth, 'Now is my soul (*psychê*) troubled, and what shall I say, Father save me from this hour?' Is that a cry for help? The English preposition is ambiguous, the Greek is decisive. It is not 'from,' in the sense of 'keep me from going into this hour,' but 'out of,' meaning 'bring me safely forth from it.' The crisis is upon him, he is in the midst of it. The sequel shows that the prayer suggested by his vision of anguish is at once set aside. 'What shall I say? Shall I say, Father, deliver me out of this

[1] Raven, p. 273.

hour ? ' He cannot ask it ; he had been sent for that very purpose to meet it ; ' But for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name '—the Johannine substitute for ' Not my will but thine be done.'

The third and highest element in a human being was what the Hebrews called *spirit* and the Greeks *nous*. If the Logos took its place, how is it that the evangelist describes Jesus as agitated ' in spirit ? ' At the grave of Lazarus he was ' moved with indignation in the spirit ' (xi. 33), apparently at the wailing of Mary and the mourning crowd, and ' troubled himself.' The same distress came upon him ' in the spirit ' at the supper table as he predicts the treachery of one who shared the meal (xiii. 21). And finally when death arrived he said ' It is finished,' and bowed his head and gave up his spirit (xix. 30).[1] How are these data to be combined with the ' enfleshment ' of the Logos ? The Evangelist is of course not writing a study in psychology ; he has the synoptic tradition to work on, but though he modifies it greatly he adheres to the popular description of death. The problem is complicated from another side. The primitive representation of the consecration or endowment of Jesus as the Anointed conceived it as effected through the descent of the Spirit at his baptism.[2] The oldest texts of Mark i. 10 describe the Spirit as entering ' into ' him, so that he was under its influence by a kind of divine possession. The Lucan narrative endows the Spirit with bodily form like a dove, which naturally only rested upon him (iii. 22). But an early reading which held its ground for centuries reported the heavenly voice as saying ' Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee,' [3] and thus marked the moment of his adoption to his high function. The Fourth Evangelist, who ignores the stories of the birth of Jesus and passes over the actual baptismal rite, nevertheless quotes the testimony of the Baptist to

[1] Compare Mark xv. 37 ; Luke xxiii. 46 ; Matthew xxvii. 50 ; Acts vii. 59.

[2] Comp. Isaiah lxi. 1, ' The Spirit of the Lord Yahweh is upon me, because Yahweh hath anointed me,' etc.

[3] The words are, of course, derived from Psalm ii. 7.

the descent of the Spirit as a dove, and adds that 'it abode upon him' (i. 32). The statement is important, for the word 'abide' is the Evangelist's term for permanent spiritual relations. Its presence is the guarantee that as God's 'apostle' [1] he speaks God's words (iii. 34), 'for he giveth not the Spirit by measure.' But how is it that the bearer of the Logos within him, the cherished companion of the Father's eternity, whom the Father loved so deeply that he gave all things into his hands, needed another revealer constantly 'upon' him to see that he spoke the right words? Are there not indications here of different interpretations of Jesus' person, one from the traditional side in the language of Hebrew idiom, the other from the Greek, which cannot really be combined? [2]

There is a further possibility which is worth noting. Justin had lived in Ephesus, and in a quasi-dramatic account of his conversion (*ante*, p. 201) places it during his residence there. He was thus in close proximity with the sources of the Logos-Christology. Yet the indications of his use of the Gospel are so faint and uncertain that (as we have seen) critics of the highest eminence can argue that he did not know it.[3] No more than other early Christian writers did he frame his statements so as to meet the views of later controversialists. His language varies in different passages of his writings. He joins the Logos with the Hebrew conception of Wisdom on the one side, and associates it with the Spirit on the other. In describing the conception of Jesus as predicted in Luke i. 35 he declares that it is not lawful to understand by the Spirit and the Power of God anything else than the Logos (1 *Apol.* xxxiii.). Elsewhere in the same Apology (lx.) he combines Moses and Plato (whom he accuses of

[1] Comp. xvii. 18, 'As thou didst send me into the world, even so send I them into the world' (*apostello*).

[2] Our Old Test. translators disguise the fact that ancient Hebrew idiom recognised the possibility of temporary incarnations of the Spirit. In Judges vi. 34 the words 'the Spirit of Yahweh came upon Gideon' really mean (as the Revisers' margin shows) 'clothed itself with him,' *i.e.* by taking possession of his person 'wore' him like a garment. The phrase held its ground in later times, as in 1 Chron. xii. 18, 2 Chron. xxiv. 20.

[3] Cp. Introduction, *ante*, p. 203.

borrowing from the Hebrew lawgiver) by giving the Logos the second place as the Power ' next to the first God,' and the third place to the Spirit. The relations of the Logos and the Spirit were thus somewhat ill-defined, just as in his anthropological statements he appears to have called the third part above body and *psychê* indifferently a fragment of the Logos or the ' Living Spirit.' [1] Justin does not use the Johannine formula, but says frankly that the Logos became man, just as he had become an angel or a flame of fire. In Christ, however, the Logos in its entirety became both ' body, reason (logos) and soul ' (2 *Apol.* x.). Contemporary theology was equally uncertain concerning the functions of the Logos and the Spirit. Hermas says in the Shepherd (*Simil.* V. vi. 5), ' The Holy pre-existent Spirit which created all creation, did God make to dwell in the flesh which he chose,' and the Vatican text declares that ' the Son is the Holy Spirit.' In like manner the homilist (2 *Clem.* ix. 5) lays it down that ' Christ, the Lord who saved us, became flesh and called us, though he was first of all Spirit.' In this confusion it has been possible for distinguished critics like Hilgenfeld, Réville, Pfleiderer, and Loisy, to argue that the descent of the Spirit witnessed by John was the moment of the union of the Divine Son with the human Jesus, in the character or function of the Logos described in the Prologue. This difficulty is avoided if the Prologue be regarded as an independent addition.

The human manifestation of the Son of God is summed up in the term Son of Man. It is of course adopted from the Synoptic tradition, but with important modifications. Its Aramaic use as the equivalent of the word ' man' as in Mark ii. 28,[2] has disappeared. Sometimes it reinterprets the Passion (*e.g.*, viii. 28 ; xii. 23, 34) ; in v. 27 it rests on the conception of the judgment. One reading in ix. 35 identifies it with the Messiah. But the name has a wider scope than in the earlier Gospels. On its first occurrence it plainly bears a new meaning. Not Nathanael only (i. 51) shall see that it has an ideal significance. The true home

[1] Goodenough, *The Theology of Justin Martyr* (Jena, 1923), p. 240.

[2] So Wellhausen, Schmidt, and others. Cp. Ps. viii. 4.

of the Son of Man is in the world on high. He is the type, like Paul's counterpart to Adam, the celestial figure which comes down from heaven (iii. 13, vi. 62). Using the symbol of Jacob's dream, the Evangelist conceives him pictorially as maintaining a constant intercourse with the society above, as the angels ascend and descend upon him. Philo had already handled the idea in his imaginative way, saying that 'God, not condescending to come down to the external senses, sends his *logoi* (*i.e.*, angels) to those who love virtue.'[1] The title Son of Man, used in immediate proximity with King of Israel, still carries with it a Messianic meaning, but takes it out of Jewish associations into the sphere of universal humanity. Jesus is the type or centre of mankind on earth, quickened by heavenly powers to do the Father's will.

The transcendental character of the Son of Man is further emphasized in the conversation with Nicodemus and the discourse on the Bread of Life.[2] To Nicodemus is unfolded the doctrine of the 'birth from above,' which he fails to understand (iii. 3-9). Jesus, in reply, appeals to the experience of the Fellowship, 'We speak that we do know,' and addresses a larger audience than his solitary visitor, 'ye receive not our witness.' The reason why he can declare heavenly things is implied in the next verse. The community recognises that he has already ascended, the only being who had the power to do so because he had first descended (cp. Ephes. iv. 9). The final words describing the existence of the Son of Man in heaven are conceived from the same point of view, and are still more incongruous with the speaker's situation in Jerusalem and the reference (ver. 14) to his future elevation on the cross, which is for him the pathway to his restoration to his pristine glory.[3] Similarly in vi. 62 the ascension is assumed.

[1] *On Dreams*, i. 12 ; Cohn-Wendland, iii. p. 219, § 69. The application here is to Abraham. For the comparison of the ladder to the soul with its foundation in the body and the *logoi* of God moving incessantly up and down through it, see chap. 23.

[2] Cp. below, Lect. VI, p. 425 ff.

[3] The words are supported by early witnesses in both East and West, Syriac and Old Latin, but are omitted by good modern editors, Nestle, Blass, and von Soden. Cp. vi. 62, xx. 17. Cp. Merx, *Die vier Kanonischen Evangelien*, ii. 2, p. 60 f.

The flesh and blood have been transmuted as the Son of Man resumes as Spirit his former life with the Father, and thence bestows his gifts of vivifying energy.

II

The Four Gospels are all alike apologies for Christianity. The earliest of them, Mark, is not a record of the life of Jesus of Nazareth, but a presentation of the Gospel of Jesus, Messiah, with or without the additional designation of Son of God.[1] The latest, John, is in the same way no biographical narrative, but another exposition of the Gospel embodied in the person of Jesus whose twofold function receives a new and more exalted interpretation. Behind the author lie both in time and substance the Synoptic Gospels, though of his literary use of them there are but scanty traces.[2] He does not employ them as both Matthew and Luke employed their predecessor. He pursues a wholly independent path, ignoring much, reshaping much, and adding much. Conjectures as to the sources of the narratives and discourses which give to his work its special character may be clever guesses, but (apart from the supposition of apostolic authorship) they can have no solid foundation. We are told, indeed, by Luke that many had occupied themselves in drawing up records of the traditions related by eyewitnesses and ministers of the Word, but his enquiries (which probably extended beyond Jerusalem and Caesarea) did not enable him to embody in his own story any of the special Johannine incidents. The compiler of the sayings of Jesus in the source now known as Q found no teachings resembling those of the Fourth Gospel save the brief declaration already noted (p. 231); but both Luke and Matthew gathered up parables and anecdotes independently, yet neither of them lighted on traditions resembling those of John. How was it that two generations of missionary

[1] According to the reading adopted in i. 1. The term 'Son of God' is further susceptible of different meanings, according to the degree of influence ascribed to the Pauline Christology.

[2] Cp. p. 227 ff.

work could pass without leaving any memories of words and deeds so striking? How could they have vanished from the interest and recollection of all but one single mind? How should Peter have failed to recall how his feet were washed, or that he ran with John (who outstripped him) to the tomb? [1] Did he really never mention such details, or did Mark not think them worth preserving? On the other hand we know how natural it was to express ideas in the form of narrative (cp. p. 243). The stories of the birth, of Peter's attempt to walk upon the water, of the rent veil of the Temple at the death of Jesus, of his ascension into heaven, are picture symbols; and in the same way the conception of Jesus as 'the Resurrection and the Life' may have given its shape 'spiritually' to the story of the summons of Lazarus from the grave.

The active ministry of Jesus from the wedding at Cana to the last summary of his public teaching (ii.-xii.) covers a period of more than two years. The final scenes with the disciples (xiii. to the original close in xx.) occupy but ten days (Thursday evening to Sunday week), but the record is a Gospel in itself within the Gospel. Only a small selection of the 'signs' wrought by the Teacher in his dual character can be presented; they advance from the change of water into wine up to the triumphant victory over death.[2] In the meanwhile the passover comes round three times (ii. 13, vi. 4, xiii. 1) instead of the single celebration at which he suffers related by the Synoptists [3] Other feasts are attended by Jesus (v. 1, vii. 2, x. 22), and the greater part of his activity is spent in Judea.

[1] Harnack in the *Sitzungsberichte* of the Prussian Academy of Sciences (1915, p. 551) expressed his adherence to the view of Schwartz, Wellhausen and Bousset, that xx. 3-10 is an addition of the type of xxi., pointed out the incongruity of ver. 9 with 8, and proposed to attach it to 2.

[2] The series from Cana to Bethany illustrates the use of the favourite artificial number seven (cp. p. 55).

[3] Writers in the second century were not agreed as to the length of the ministry. Irenæus upheld the Johannine chronology. Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian both limited it to one year, and this view may be traced as late as Augustine. Cp. Drummond, *Character and Authorship of the Fourth Gospel*, p. 46. It has been already mentioned that the late Prof. C. H. Briggs regarded all the Johannine passovers as really identical (p. 193).

Its incidents are linked by many small time-marks and specifications of place ; [1] as well as by notes of recollection and references to things said or done.[2] The successive scenes are thus bound together into a whole, but its parts are sometimes in curious contradiction with the earlier narratives.

It is a small matter that the unction at Bethany should be placed in the house of Lazarus the day before the festal entry into Jerusalem (xii. 1, 12) instead of two or three days after it in the house of Simon the leper (Mark xi. 1, xiv. 3).[3] A much more serious divergence occurs in the transfer of the purging of the Temple from the close to the opening of Jesus' ministry in the Capital. It is described with more detail than in the preceding Gospels. Jesus is not unaccompanied, for his immediate disciples are with him, but there is no joyous march into the city—whether the day before as in Mark, or, as Matthew dramatically arranges it, in immediate precedence—to assure him of some support. There is no challenge from temple officers, chief priests, scribes, or elders. Still less does the interference in the temple-traffic awaken the hostility which afterwards led to his arrest. Only 'the Jews,' the persistent opponents of Jesus (so named 67 times), catch up the claim implied in his words 'My Father's house,' [4] and ask by what 'sign' he can justify it. His enigmatical reply recalls the perverted testimony of witnesses at the trial (Mark xiv. 58), and can only be understood in connexion with what follows. Before attempting an explanation let me call attention to a remarkable tradition current in the second century, and expressly referred by Irenæus to

[1] Cp. i. 29, 35, 43, ii. 1, 12, 13, iii. 22, etc. ; i. 28, 44, ii. 1, 12, iii. 23, iv. 5, etc.

[2] *E.g.* ii. 17, 22 ; xii. 16 ; iv. 46 ; vii. 21 ; xi. 2, 37 ; xii. 17, 42 ; xiii. 33 ; xv. 20.

[3] Luke, it will be remembered, follows an altogether independent tradition (vii. 37-50). For the significance of the date in connexion with the 'setting apart of the paschal lamb,' cp. the statement of Epiphanius (*Haer.* li. 3) applied by Prof. Bacon, *The Gospel of Mark* (1925), p. 171. He thinks that Jesus was 'thus anointed to be the Lamb of God.'

[4] Is this an echo of Luke ii. 49, the earliest recorded visit of Jesus to the Temple ?

John (whom he has identified with the apostle), concerning the age of Jesus and the duration of his teaching ministry.[1]

The baptism of Jesus is assigned by Luke to his thirtieth year (iii. 23); in the last twelve-month of his life the Jews declared that he was not yet fifty years old (John viii. 57). This language, argues Irenæus, was appropriate to one who had passed forty, and was not far from completing another decade. It was not reasonable to suppose that the Jews were mistaken by nearly twenty years. Accordingly, after pleading on general grounds that he who was to save all must himself have passed through every stage of life, must have been a child for children and an old man for old men, Irenæus invokes the testimony of the Apostle John and the elders of Asia against the Valentinian heretics who wished to limit his public career to one year:

'From the fortieth and fiftieth year a man begins to decline towards old age, in which condition our Lord continued teaching, as the Gospel and all the Elders who were conversant in Asia with John, the disciple of the Lord, testify that John had handed down these things. For he remained among them up to the time of Trajan. Some of them, moreover, saw not only John, but other apostles also, and heard the very same account from them, and bear testimony concerning this report. Whom then should we rather believe? Such men as these, or Ptolemæus who never saw any apostles?'

The testimony of the Elders to the age of Jesus as implied in the Fourth Gospel is thus identified with the Apostle. What light is thrown on the inference from the Jews' subsequent language by their objection to the 'sign' which Jesus offers them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up'—'Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou raise it up in three days?' Much learning has been expended since the days of Eusebius in the endeavour to fit the figure to the erection of the Second Temple rebuilt under Darius, or with its reconstruction by Herod.[2] These adaptations are needless, for the Evangelist himself explains it, 'He spake of the

[1] *Against Heresies*, ii. 22, 4-6. Cp. *ante*, p. 215.

[2] Thus, for example, Dr. E. A. Abbott (*Johannine Grammar*, § 2083, p. 81) identified the figure with the period from the first year of Cyrus,

temple of his body.' The reply of Jesus refers of course to his death and resurrection; the question of the Jews is the first illustration of a series of misunderstandings by which Jesus is pursued all through his career. The mysterious figure had another application, and was elaborately explained by Augustine on the understanding that Jesus was speaking 'spiritually.' [1] He spoke, says the Evangelist, of the temple of his body. Now 'Christ's flesh is of Adam.' 'Of Adam is the temple which the Jews destroyed and the Lord raised up in three days.' But the numerical value of the four Greek letters of Adam's name is 46: 'The Jews destroyed the temple which was 46 years in building (Christ's body), and that temple he raised up in three days.' In other words, at the opening of his ministry as related by John he was forty-six. Before the colloquy with the Jews which brought on him the retort 'Thou art not yet fifty years old' two passovers had intervened.[2] Jesus was thus carried on towards the jubilee period of fifty. Augustine assures his readers that his explanation was not his own. 'These things, my brethren, were said by our ancestors before us.' [3]

Another striking divergence divides the Fourth Gospel

King of Persia (Ezra i. 1), 559 B.C., to the ninth of Darius (Josephus, *Antt.* x. 1, 1), 513, and urged that the Jews among themselves would regard the second temple as being merely repaired by Herod, not as rebuilt. The Herodean construction is reckoned from its beginning in 20-19 B.C. to A.D. 27-28, a date often accepted in connexion with the Lukan synchronism for the preaching of the Baptist (the fifteenth year of Tiberius, iii. 1). Dr. Sanday formerly laid great stress on this 'accuracy,' 'the actual words stuck in the memory of the Apostle, and were reproduced by him just as they were spoken' (*Criticism of the Fourth Gospel*, p. 122).

[1] *Tract. in Joann.* x. 16; cp. *De Trin.* iv. 5, and on the other hand *De Doctr. Christiana*, ii. 28.

[2] Second century writers (Tatian and Irenæus) add a third by identifying the unnamed feast in v. 1 with the passover.

[3] It appears to be derived from the treatise once attributed to Cyprian, *De Montibus Sina et Sion*, iv. (Hartel, iii. p. 108), but the unknown author gives no clue to its origin. For another use of numerical symbolism cp. p. 247. How names may be interpreted numerically may be seen in the Apocalyptic figure 666 (cp. p. 137), but, of course, the Evangelist was apparently only using current Asiatic tradition, without any reference to Adam. The idea of the body as a temple is frequent in the Pauline letters, *e.g.* 1 Cor. vi. 19, 2 Cor. vi. 16; and it has been suggested that the rending of the temple veil at the death of

from the First Three concerning the character and meaning of the last meal of Jesus with his disciples and the day of his death. All the Evangelists agree in the main fact that he was crucified on a Friday, the day before the Sabbath. But they differ not only in various details of the scene itself but also in the significance of the day. Mark expressly identifies the supper on the preceding Thursday evening with the passover supper, for which two disciples under their master's instructions have made special preparation, Luke specifying that the commission was given to Peter and John (xxii. 8).[1] The arrest of Jesus in the garden follows when the meal is over, and the narrative passes on swiftly to its destined end on the first day of the week of unleavened bread. In the Johannine version the events are conceived quite differently. The meal is apparently the ordinary supper of Jesus and the twelve 'before the feast of the passover' (xiii. 1). The proceedings are quite different from those of the paschal celebration. The reason becomes apparent when the significant statement is reached that the Jewish accusers who conducted Jesus from the house of Caiaphas for trial by Pilate would not enter the Roman precincts 'that they might not be defiled, but might eat the passover' (xviii. 28). The attempts to explain this phrase of some other ritual element than the paschal lamb can no longer

Christ was a symbol founded on the same poetical conception of his hallowed person. The above interpretation as to the age of Jesus is practically accepted by various commentators, such as Heitmüller, W. Bauer, Prof. B. W. Bacon (*The Fourth Gospel in Research and Debate*, p. 397 ff.), M. Loisy and Père Calmes. The two latter, however, get at the number in a different way, founding themselves on the language of Daniel, ix. 25, in connexion with the Messianic period of seven weeks of years, the last week being broken in two, and three and a half years being allotted to the actual ministry, which would then continue on the three-passovers scheme till Jesus was forty-nine, and he would enter on his glorification in his jubilee. Cp. Thoma, *Genesis des Joh.-Ev.* (1882), p. 749 f. In the *Journal of Theol. Studies*, ix. pp. 42-61, Dom Chapman argued (1) that the statement of Irenæus was derived from Papias on the supposition that Papias had himself heard it from the Elders; but (2) that Papias had himself really invented it as part of a series of sevens connected with other similar groups.

[1] Yet John is supposed to have correctly represented the date and character of the meal which Peter and his reporter Mark had confused. Or was Luke in error in naming him as Peter's companion?

be sustained,[1] and the inevitable inference is that at that early hour the lambs had not yet been killed. Friday was, as the Evangelist specifies, the Preparation of the passover (xix. 14). Jesus, after a few hours' suffering, dies in the afternoon, when the lambs are being killed in the temple for the evening celebration ; there was no need to hasten his decease by breaking his legs ; he escaped this brutality ' that the Scripture might be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken ' (xix. 36). Whence came this rule ? It was part of the regulations for the killing of the paschal lamb (Exod. xii. 46), and its application to Jesus implies that he died in that character. Had not the Apostle Paul said ' Our passover also hath been sacrificed, *even* Christ ' (1 Cor. v. 7) ? [2] It is in that character that ' God's lamb ' (i. 29) gives up his spirit (xix. 30).

Many attempts have been made to reconcile this divergence, but they have been practically abandoned in this country by the most clear-sighted students.[3] The historian must make his choice between the two dates, he cannot combine them. The choice is not easy, for either view involves great difficulties. These have weighed so heavily against the account in Mark that many critics who have abandoned the Johannine authorship of the Fourth Gospel nevertheless prefer its actual identification of the crucifixion hours. Does not Mark himself report

[1] See the Commentary of Strack-Billerbeck, vol. ii. (1924), p. 837 ff.

[2] This is, of course, not to be understood as a considered theological statement. It is an analogy flung out on the top of the warning that the unchastity of a Corinthian offender may infect the Church with the leaven of wickedness just as ' a little leaven leavens the whole lump.'

[3] Attention may, however, be directed to the hypothesis supported by a wealth of Jewish learning expounded in the excursus at the close of the Strack-Billerbeck Commentary, vol. ii. It appears that there were occasionally certain years in which there was a difference of opinion between the Pharisees and Sadducees as to the proper reckoning of the first of Nisan. One scheme arranged it so that the passover lambs killed according to the law on the 14th were slain on Thursday and eaten that evening ; this was the Pharisaic interpretation ; the other, determined by the Sadducees, put the 14th on Friday. It is suggested that the year of Jesus' death was such a year. He followed the Pharisaic reckoning, which was generally popular. The Evangelist, acquainted with the official practice of the temple authorities, adopted the tradition of the supper which divested it of the paschal character, and identified the crucifixion with the killing of the lambs. Cp. Burkitt, *Journal of Theological Studies*, xvii. p. 291.

that the original plot of the temple authorities proposed to avoid the feast lest a tumult should arise apparently for the rescue of their victim (xiv. 2) ? [1] How, then, could he arrange his narrative so as to bring the catastrophe on to the day of greatest danger ? If Jesus was actually arrested and executed after the passover had been eaten on the first day of unleavened bread, why did not Mark explain the circumstances which led them to take action earlier ? And how could the proceedings which according to the later codification of the law were illegal, be justified ? There is no answer to such questions except by conjecture, and conjecture, it must be repeated, is not history. It is sometimes supposed that in consequence of the dependence of Matthew and Luke on Mark the triple testimony of the Synoptics may be reduced to a single strand. It may, however, be pointed out that in both Gospels material has been collected from other sources, and this is no less true in the story of the Passion than in other parts of their narratives. The Lukan account of the appearances after the resurrection is markedly different from that of the other two. But neither Evangelist appears to have any hesitation in following Mark's chronology. Neither was limited to one particular circle of traditions. Both include representations of incident and teaching which differ widely from each other.[2] Yet there is no indication of any doubt about the character of the last meal of the Teacher and his disciples, and the consequent significance of the day of his death. And the story comes to us, as is generally admitted, through the record of one who was himself a resident in Jerusalem, and wrote down his recollections of the teaching of Peter, at the same time that details gathered elsewhere are incorporated in it without demur.

In the Fourth Gospel, on the other hand, a formidable list of differences from the Synoptic narratives can be

[1] ' Not during the feast ' probably means ' not till the feast is over', rather than ' before it begins.' The language of Justin, *Dial.* cxi., is ambiguous ; to what record does he refer ?

[2] Unimportant instances may be seen in Matthew's change of the day of the cleansing of the temple or the withering of the fig-tree, or Luke's version of the unction of Jesus (vii. 37-50) compared with Mark's.

immediately compiled. Most striking of all is the account of the last Supper, with its exquisite picture of the Son of God washing his disciples' feet, and preparing them by tender exhortation for the trials and the guidance of the future. At every step that follows some novelty is introduced. No agony besets Jesus under the olives of Gethsemane. Instead of the untrained crowd armed with swords and staves, sent by the priestly authorities, a Roman cohort duly officered invades the garden, and before the majesty of the single unarmed figure which has advanced to meet him falls prostrate on the ground. The prisoner is interrogated first at the house of Annas. There Peter is introduced by 'another disciple,' the story of his triple denial being carried on from ver. 18 at ver. 25 after Jesus has been sent to Caiaphas, whence he is led unexamined to the Roman Governor.[1] Pilate holds private conversations with the accused. The mother of Jesus and the beloved disciple stand in the crowd around the cross, and that the scripture might be fulfilled the sufferer cries 'I thirst.' If there are new incidents thus introduced it is no less surprising that the institution of the New Covenant should be entirely omitted,[2] and the agony in the Garden ignored. The former has been replaced in a highly developed form by the discourse on the Living Bread (chap. vi.); the anguish of conflict indicated in the other could not arise in the Son's union with the Father. The tragic story has been retold from a fresh point of view, in the light of a new conception of the person of Christ. To those who have already recognised in the Fourth Gospel a large element of symbolism, this will not appear strange. They will have encountered already serious transpositions of important events; and whatever difficulties may attend the Synoptic date for the crucifixion,[3] they will feel that those of the Johannine narrative are from the side of history graver still, and will be disposed to agree with

[1] Early attempts were made to reconcile this confusion by transposition of verses.

[2] Cp. below, p. 419 ff.

[3] Perhaps the fullest discussion from the Synoptic side is that in Keim's *Jesus of Nazara*, vol. vi.; the same view is more briefly defended

the trenchant remark of Dr. Inge: 'The prophetic type of the Paschal lamb dominates the whole of the Passion narrative in St. John. Even the date, it would appear, is altered in order that Christ may die on the day when the Paschal Lambs were killed.' [1]

III

'We have seen and bear witness,' says the First Letter. 'We beheld his glory' says the Prologue. Such is the testimony of the Fellowship of believers who share the life of the church. In the Gospel that testimony assumes historic form. But it is in reality, if I may so phrase it, super-historic. Its value does not lie in the details of journeys, or the annual round of feasts. Nor are even the words or works of Jesus the essential matters with which the Evangelist is concerned. There is a realm of the unseen, a whole world of thought and feeling on another plane of reality, and through symbols and emblems the writer strives to present it pictorially to the believer's gaze. We cannot always trace the source from which they come; they may even be derived from regions beyond the range of Christian thought. To Nathanael, the guileless Israelite, type of the believing Jew, the promise runs (with a change from 'thou' to 'ye,' as though addressed to all believers), 'Ye shall see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man' (cp. p. 366). 'We speak that we do know,' says Jesus to Nicodemus, with the voice of the Church, in the name of the Son of Man who had once descended out of heaven, and having reascended is now there, and consequently able to proclaim heavenly things. Behind the visible lies the invisible, and hints and allusions open up vistas of the Eternal behind the sphere of time.

by M. Jean Réville, *Le Quatrième Évangile* (1901), p. 265 ff. There are some wise words by Dr. Nolloth, *The Fourth Gospel*, p. 134, but it is too much to assert that the Evangelist has 'spiritualised historic fact without impairing its actuality.' If Jesus did not say and do the things ascribed to him, the claims raised on his behalf must (so far as they are concerned) be reconsidered. They cannot do more than prove what he was believed to be.

[1] *Dictionary of Christ*, i. p. 887.

Consider, for example, the opening scene of the ministry at Cana. It may quite well be that we have not always the right key to the inner meaning. Not all the 'signs' are as easy to interpret as the feast in the wilderness, or the cure of the blind youth, or the raising of Lazarus, in which Jesus is successively presented as the Bread of Life, the Light of the World, and above all as the Resurrection and the Life. The significance of the conversion of the water into wine is less obvious. But that allegory is hidden in the story is in a high degree probable. Six days have passed since the Baptist's first announcement that his successor is already present (i. 26). In the gathering of the first disciples the new spiritual creation has begun, and the marriage at Cana falls upon the seventh day. A wedding was the familiar Synoptic symbol of the Kingdom of God, and at their last supper Jesus told his disciples that he would drink no more wine with them till it should come. Apocalyptic chronology sometimes represented the reign of the Messiah as the sabbath of a great world-week, and the assignment of the marriage to the seventh day as the occasion for the first manifestation of Jesus' transcendent power, points in the same direction. The wine has unexpectedly run short,[1] and the Messiah's mother calls her Son's attention to the need. What happens? A miraculous supply is produced and taken to the 'ruler of the feast,' whose business it was to lay the tables and couches and arrange the dishes, and he congratulates the bridegroom on its excellence. 'We should not have anticipated,' wrote Canon Richmond,[2] 'that his first miracle would have been done to relieve a social awkwardness, to save host and guest from embarrassment at a friendly gathering, but there is no denying that on the face of the story this is his motive.' The difficulty thus frankly expressed suggests that there must be some other explanation. It is a parable in action. The wine that failed was the old wine of Judaism. The

[1] Some commentators assume that like the wedding of Tobias (Tobit xi. 19) the festivities had already lasted the best part of seven days.

[2] *The Gospel of the Rejection* (1906), p. 153 f.

Messiah's mother makes an implied request for help. The older commentators discovered various meanings in her appeal; Calvin, that Jesus should preach to the company and engage their attention, so as to relieve the bridegroom's shame; Bengel, that he should politely take leave and induce others to follow his example before the deficiency was discovered. Jesus in his reply gives us the clue, 'Lady' (our English 'woman' has been supposed erroneously to be the language of rebuke, or even of irritation and temper at her interference),[1] 'My hour is not yet come.' What was the hour to whose destined advent he thus looked forward? It is part of the Evangelist's presentation that Jesus enters on his saving work with full consciousness of its end.[2] His death which will liberate him from his human form, will mean his return to the Father, and his reinstatement in the heavenly life will be his 'glorification' as the source of grace to all the world. Meantime the life-power of the old religion is exhausted. Its water-pots of purification are empty. What will take its place? He bids the servant fill the six water-pots with water,[3] and the value of Judaism during the six days of the world-week is perhaps thus recognised. And by the subsequent conversion of

[1] Cp. the same address upon the cross, xix. 26. Greek literature supplies abundant instances of this use of the word in dignity and respect. On the other hand, Bishop Wordsworth interprets—'What have I as God to do with thee, a woman? Dost thou suppose that the divine power by which I work miracles can be set in motion by thee, because thou art the mother of my humanity?' So, practically, Westcott: 'Leave me to myself, let me follow out my own course,' 'the actions of the Son of God now that he has entered on his divine work, are no longer dependent in any way on the suggestion of a woman.'

[2] Cp. vii. 6, 8 ('my time'); vii. 30; viii. 20; xii. 23, 27; xiii. 1; xvii. 1. On his 'glorification,' cp. below, p. 399.

[3] A *metrētēs* ('firkin') is said to be nearly nine gallons. Bishop Wordsworth regards the production of this enormous quantity of wine as a 'delicate mode of conveying a handsome wedding present to the young couple,' and supposes that what remained after the wedding was used for the Eucharist in the early Galilean Church. Prof. B. Weiss, unable apparently to accept the physical miracle, suggests that Jesus 'found ways and means through the mediation of Nathanael' to supply the deficiency (*Joh. Evangelium*, 1912, p. 46 f.). But for such guesses there is not a shadow of justification in the Gospel narrative.

their contents into wine the issue of Christianity out of Judaism is predicted.[1]

Recent investigation, however, indicates that the symbolism of the story does not end here. Before the close of the eighteenth century attention had been called to the widespread Greek legends of the miraculous production of wine on certain annual occasions by Dionysos.[2] At Elis in Greece, says Pausanias, where no god was more revered than Dionysos, he was believed to attend the festival known as the Thyia. Three empty kettles were taken into a building and deposited there by the priests in the presence of the citizens, and on the doors of the building the priests and all who chose to do so put their seals. The next morning the kettles were found full of wine.[3] Pliny relates on the authority of Mucianus who had been three times consul that every year on the 5th of January a certain fountain in the temple of Dionysos in the Island of Andros tasted like wine, but that if the liquid were taken out of sight of the temple it tasted like water again.[4] On the island of Teos also a sacred spring ran with wine instead of water. Three hundred years later Epiphanius affirms that he had witnessed the same miracle on Jan. 6 in Lycia and Caria, and tasted the miraculous wine. Two other items of his testimony are important, the account of the Alexandrian festival on the night of January 5-6, when the birth of the god Aion from the virgin Korê was celebrated, and a similar description of a corresponding festival on the same date in the Arabian city of Petra in honour of another virgin goddess and the birth of her son Dusares, who bore the title *Monogenês*. The dates of these festivals on the night of January 5-6

[1] This interpretation assumes that the Evangelist meant that it was the water in the pots that was changed. But the Greek word (' draw out ') was used of drawing water from a well (Gen. xxiv. 13, 20; Exod. ii. 16, 19), and is so employed in the scene at Jacob's well (iv. 7, 15). Some scholars have accordingly understood that after the six pots were filled more water was drawn which became wine as it was carried to the symposiarch.

[2] Dupuis, *Origine de tous les Cultes* (1794), tome ii. part 2, p. 71. Cp. Gruppe, *Griech. Mythol.* (1906), p. 736 [3], ; De Jong, *Das Antike Mysterienwesen* (1909), p. 168 f.

[3] vi. 26, 1 ; cp. Frazer, *Pausanias*, iv. 108. [4] Frazer, *ibid.*

coincide with that of the miracle at Andros; and it is now recognised that Aion and Dusares were the same deity, and Dusares was identified by the Greeks with Dionysos.[1]

Now the Cana miracle is said to be the first manifestation by Jesus of his 'glory.' The Christian festival of the Manifestation (*Epiphany*) first comes into view at Alexandria in the second half of the second century.[2] It was preceded by a night of devotional exercises and was celebrated in honour of the baptism of Jesus on January 6, regarded as the day of his spiritual birth. It seems, therefore, in a high degree probable that the Christian festival of the Epiphany was designed by those who first observed it to take the place of a Dionysian commemoration, just as the later date for the festival of the human Birth of Christ was attached to the Mithraic festival of the birthday of the unconquered Sun on December 25. Long before the practice of celebrating the Epiphany had established itself in any group of Christians—the Gnostic followers of the Egyptian Basilides named by Clement at Alexandria—a certain analogy however distant must have been recognised between the figures of Dionysos and Jesus. Just as the prophet of the Apocalypse could adapt a widespread myth of the flight of Isis with her babe to Christian use,[3] so it would seem did the Fourth Evangelist transform the miracles of Dionysos into an imaginative symbol of the glory of Christ.[4]

The miracle at Cana possesses a character peculiar to itself. It is unknown to the Synoptists, and there is no clue to any recognisable source in the background. The

[1] Cp. Arnold Meyer, *Entstehung des Weihnachtsfestes* (1913), and Bousset, *Kyrios Christos* (1913), pp. 75, 332, 335.

[2] See the passage from Clement of Alexandria quoted by Dr. F. C. Conybeare in the article 'Epiphany' in the *Enc. Brit.* vi. (1910), p. 695. How old it then was we do not know.

[3] Cp. *Rev.* xii, and *ante*, p. 119. Dionysos was often designated 'Son of Zeus.'

[4] In vol. ii. of his *Untersuchungen über die Entstehung des vierten Evangeliums* (1923) Prof. Grill (with only a brief reference to the coincidences named above, p. 108) endeavours to carry the analogy all through the Gospel to the Passion and Resurrection. Cp. Clemen, *Religionsgeschichtliche Erklärung des N.T.*[2] (1924), p. 267.

student of classical antiquity is well aware of the kind of expectation which gathered around lofty personalities. 'The whole ancient world,' says Professor Deissmann, 'is full of miracles; definite types of miracle become fixed by the tradition of thousands of years and occur again and again in all sorts of places.' [1] The narratives of the Fourth Evangelist are only, as he himself tells us, a selection from a much larger number. It is not unreasonable, therefore, to infer that they have been chosen for a special purpose, and are intended to convey a particular meaning. Even when they look back to Synoptic incidents some heightened detail is apparently designed to render them more impressive as manifestations of transcendent power. Thus in the story of the sick boy who was cured at a distance (iv. 46-54) the Evangelist looks back to Luke vii. 2 with the statement that he was 'at the point' of death. The centurion has become a *basiliskos* or 'king's officer.' As in Matt. viii. 5 he comes himself, but he does not meet Jesus as he is entering Capernaum, he must go all the way to Cana. The persistence of the father's entreaty in spite of its first rebuff by Jesus [2] earns him the help he sought, and when his servants meet him with the news of his son's recovery, the enquiry into the hour at which the improvement set in demonstrates the healing efficacy of Jesus' word. The cure of the cripple at the pool of Bethesda, helpless for thirty-eight years, is linked with that of the paralytic at Capernaum by the

[1] *Light from the Ancient East* (1910), p. 393, cp. *Licht vom Osten* [4] (1923), p. 330; Wendland, *Die Hellenistisch-Römische Kultur* [2] (1912), p. 310.

[2] Significantly addressed to him in the plural as the representative of a class (48) rather than as a person in great trouble seeking help. 'Signs and wonders' as in Rom. xv. 19; 2 Cor. xii. 12; Heb. ii. 4. In Mark only eschatologically, xiii. 22; Matt. xxiv. 24. Ct. Mk. viii. 11-12; Mt. xii. 38-39. Cp. the story of the cure of the daughter of the Syro-Phœnician woman, Mark vii. 25-30. When the son of Rabban Gamaliel was ill, he sent two disciples to Rabbi Hanina ben Dosa (about 70 A.D.) to ask his prayers for the youth. Hanina went up on to the house-top and prayed. When he came down he said to the messengers, 'Go your way, the fever has left him.' They recorded the hour, and when they returned to Rabban Gamaliel they learned that the cure had taken place at the same time. *Berachoth*, in Goldschmidt's *Talmud*, i. p. 130; Fiebig, *Jüd. Wundergeschichten* (1911), p. 20.

identity of the command 'arise, take up thy bed and walk.'[1] But the incident has been transferred from the Galilean village to the historic centre of the national religion, and its symbolic application is implied in the number thirty-eight. Moreover it is placed on the sabbath, and this enables Jesus to declare the spiritual identity of his work with the Father's (v. 17).[2] The control of nature with which Jesus walks across the stormy sea carries the boat to land 'immediately' after he has been received into it (vi. 21). When the suggestion is made that the man blind from his birth suffered from his own or his parents' sin, the answer is 'Neither, but that the works of God should be made manifest in him' (ix. 3). He was born blind that he might be there for Jesus to give him sight. Once more Jesus associates himself with others in working the works of God (as in teaching, iii. 11), with special emphasis on his exalted character of Light of the World as long as he is in it. It is in curious contrast with this high function that he proceeds to use his spittle as an instrument for opening the unseeing eyes.[3] But the meaning of the story cannot be hid; the Jews, confident that God had spoken to Moses, refuse to believe in Christ, and draw down on themselves the warning—'For judgment came I into this world, that they which see not may see; and that they which see may become blind.' For the immortal story of the resurrection of Lazarus conjecture has often sought some source, but in vain.[4] The news of his illness calls forth an immediate explanation from Jesus; it will not be fatal, it is 'for the glory of God,

[1] John v. 8; Mark ii. 11. The parallel is all the closer because John reproduces Mark's vulgar word *krabatton* ('bed'), which Matthew and Luke have both altered in different ways.

[2] Cp. *ante*, pp. 344, 245.

[3] Cp. Mark viii. 23 (where, however, no clay plaster is made). Cp. the similar cure ascribed to the Emperor Vespasian at Alexandria by the same means, Tacitus, *History*, iv. 81. For the curative use in other cases, cp. Mark vii. 33, and Strack-Billerbeck *in loc.* As a protection against demons cp. Frazer, *Golden Bough*, index, s.v. 'spittle.'

[4] In the Epitome of Philip of Sidê (*ante*, p. 213) Papias is credited with the mention of persons raised from the dead by Christ who lived into the reign of Hadrian. More stories, therefore, were apparently in circulation.

that the Son of God may be glorified thereby' (xi. 4). He thus knows already what he would do (as in vi. 6); he will give a supreme proof of his power as 'the Resurrection and the Life.' When he issues the solemn summons 'Lazarus, come forth,' and the dead man, swathed in the grave-clothes which prevented the movement of a limb, with covered face so that he could not see, appears mysteriously from the darkness of the cave, his prayer because of the by-standers is fulfilled, and many of the Jews believed on him. Of the sisters' joy, of the experience of a soul recalled from another world no word is said.[1] Attention is concentrated solely on the production of faith. The event is related with an elaboration to which there is no parallel in the restoration of the daughter of Jairus from her couch or of the son of the widow of Nain from the funeral bier. It is plainly unknown to the earlier Evangelists, and it leads Caiaphas to propose to compass the death of Jesus with an unintended prophecy—not of his own making—that it would result in the union of the children of God (*i.e.*, members of the church) that were scattered abroad. So did a later writer explain how the sickness of Lazarus—at first declared to be not unto death—was ultimately overruled for the glorification of the Son of God.

'We must work,' said Jesus, in the name of the Fellowship (ix. 4), 'the works of him that sent me.' It is noteworthy that they do not include any of the expulsions of evil spirits to which Jesus appeals in the Synoptic records as a proof that the Rule of God was already being established (Matt. xii. 28; Luke xi. 20). Nor do they spring from the deep compassion for suffering so often noted in the earlier traditions. They are offered as testimony to his mission, 'the works bear witness of me that the Father hath sent me' (v. 36, x. 25). 'Though ye believe not me,' he pleads, 'believe the works' (x. 38); 'believe me that

[1] It is probable that the interval of four days after death had reference to the familiar Jewish belief that the soul remained for three days in the neighbourhood of the corpse before finally leaving it. The wonder of its restoration was thus heightened. On the probable origin of the current view in Persian eschatology see Böklen's essay, *Die Verwandschaft der Jüd. Christlichen mit der Parsischen Eschatologie* (1902).

I am in the Father, and the Father in me, or else believe me for the very works' sake' (xiv. 11). It is in this character of evidence that they are called 'signs.' What then do they signify? Naturally, first of all, the power with which they are wrought; and that power is given him from above; 'the Father abiding in me doeth his works' (xiv. 10). But further, that power is itself a symbol of a force that worked on the soul as well as on the body. To the Fellowship out of which these stories came a great new spiritual energy had been visibly manifested. They had felt it enter their own lives and reshape their inmost natures. They saw it around them, advancing from city to city, land to land, saving men from darkness and error, bringing them into the light of truth, lifting them out of sin and sorrow, and filling them with a rapture of trust and joy. To us Christianity is too often something abstract and impersonal. In one aspect it is a great historical generalisation. But to the early believers Christ was a life, not an organisation, or a tendency, or the impalpable spirit of an age. They looked upon the changes which Christ had wrought, and they saw in them a mighty manifestation of the moral and spiritual forces which held the world together, giving consistency to the universe, and shaping the destinies of history. In Christ who had been sent by God, God showed himself to man, 'He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.' Christ was thus himself a 'sign' on a transcendent scale. The evidential value of the signs, then, does not lie in the external event any more than the significance of his nature lay in his visible person. The Evangelist lives in a world in which the transition is easy from the symbol to the unseen reality. His thought is clothed in forms of sight and sound. But what he portrays is the result of invisible agencies. In the stories which lead up to the Bread of Life, the Light of the World, the Resurrection and the Life, the parables of Christian trust and experience were writ large for all to read. Here lay the secret of the promise, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto the Father.'

What greater works? Set more cripples on their feet, feed more thousands, give sight to more blind, raise more dead? Assuredly not. The works are works of the Spirit. The future superiority of the disciples' achievements depends on the departure of the Teacher, because it was only when he was no longer with them that the Church could set out to overcome the world. When the younger Pliny described to the emperor Trajan (111-112 A.D.) the abandoned altars, the deserted temples, the neglected worship, of Bithynia, where Christianity had already made unexampled progress, he bore testimony to the harvest from the seed of apostolic toil. It is in Samaria, the nearest representative of the world outside the Jew, first evangelised by Philip, followed by Peter and John, that the exalted Christ tells his disciples, 'I sent you to reap that whereon ye have not laboured; others have laboured, and ye are entered into their labour.' [1]

IV

At the outset of his ministry, before he has spoken a word, but has been already proclaimed as 'God's Lamb,' Jesus is addressed by Andrew and his companion as 'Rabbi' ('Teacher'). It was the familiar designation of the previous Gospels. Nathanael also employs it; and just as Andrew had already told Peter that he had found the Messiah, so Nathanael affirms of the Teacher that he is both Son of God and King of Israel (i. 41 and 49). The character of Messiah in its loftiest form is thus attributed to Jesus from the outset, and its fatal close is implied in the declaration at Cana that his hour was not yet come. It colours his whole language; it is even announced by himself to the Samaritan woman; her fellow-townsmen believe without any 'signs' on the ground of 'his word,' and proclaim him in consequence 'the Saviour of the world' (iv. 26 and 42). In contrast with the traditions embodied in Mark, where the Messianic secret is only revealed to the disciples on the eve of the journey to

[1] Cp. Acts viii. 5 ff.; John iv. 38. Ct. Matt. x. 5, 'Go not into any way of the Gentiles, and enter not into any city of the Samaritans.'

Jerusalem when Peter has acknowledged him to be the Christ (viii. 29), numbers already 'believe on his name' at Jerusalem on occasion of the first passover (ii. 23). Nicodemus is not, indeed, one of these adherents, but he seeks him out as a 'Teacher come from God' (iii. 2), and this aspect of his ministry is kept in constant view throughout (iv. 31; vi. 25; ix. 2; xi. 8). In the tender intimacy of the last meal Jesus himself refers to it, 'Ye call me Teacher and Lord, and ye say well; for so I am.'[1] What, then, is the relation of the Johannine teaching to that of the First Three Evangelists?

The difference in style has been often described, and it is no longer needful to dwell, for example, on the monologues attributed to Jesus in language which passes so easily into the Evangelist's reflexions (*e.g.*, iii. 16-21), on the absence of the appeal for repentance, the promise of forgiveness,[2] and the parables of the kingdom of God. Echoes of Synoptic language are occasionally heard in fresh connexions and modified forms;[3] but a large part of the public ministry is occupied by the exposition of the transcendent character of Jesus and the significance of Christianity in relation to Judaism on the one hand and the world on the other. In these themes the intimate knowledge of his countrymen, their home life, their occupations, his sympathy with their dangers, trials, and sufferings, and the aspects of the Galilean scene in which they are enfolded, all disappear. The prophet from Nazareth who must be shown round the temple when he comes up to Jerusalem (Matt. xxiv. 1), is transformed into

[1] xiii. 13. 'Lord' was the title of courtesy (Aramaic *Mar*) used to a Teacher: Dalman, *Words of Christ* (1902), p. 325; Strack-Billerbeck, *in loc.* Cp. Matt. xxiii. 8.

[2] This, however, is not forgotten. It was part of the early preaching of the kingdom of God (cp. Luke xxiv. 47; Acts ii. 38; x. 43), and soon called for a discipline to regulate it; cp. J. E. C., *Phases of Early Christianity*, p. 396 ff. The clue is given in xx. 23.

[3] Thus cp. xii. 25, 26, with the Synoptic parallels, Mark viii. 35; Matt. xvi. 25; Luke ix. 24; Matt. x. 39; Luke xvii. 33; Mark viii. 34. Or xiii. 16, xv. 20; Matt. x. 24; or xiii. 20; Mark ix. 37; Matt. x. 40. Notice the repeated formula of introduction, 'verily, verily,' twenty-five times, whereas the Synoptics only use a single 'verily.' An echo of Pauline language is heard in viii. 34, 35.

the defender of his own divinity against the angry Jews whom he denounces as ' of their father the devil ' (viii. 44).

' Good Teacher,' enquired the possessor of wealth, ' what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life ? ' (Mark x. 17). To such a question Jesus might have answered in Johannine speech that he had himself come that men might have it, and have it abundantly (x. 10).[1] And he would have added that it did not consist of doing anything, but in knowing God and Jesus Christ whom he had sent (xvii. 3). To prove his mission is one of the Evangelist's main objects in the controversy with the Jews. We have already seen that he appeals to the witness of the works (p. 383) ; and a second line of testimony is founded on John the Baptist (v. 33). His own testimony to himself is not valid (v. 31, viii. 13), according to Jewish jurisprudence, though he asserts its trustworthiness on the ground of his own self-knowledge of his origin and destiny (cp. vii. 28). But as their law admits the evidence of two persons, he adds as his second witness the loftiest conceivable, the Father who sent him (vii. 18 ; cp. v. 32, 37). How this attestation is provided is not quite clear. The Jews to whom he speaks have never heard God's voice nor seen his form, nor have they his Word abiding in them. But they possess the Scriptures which testify of him, and if they search them they will find how Moses (who did hear God's voice and see his form) wrote of him (v. 39, 46). He is therefore fully entitled to claim belief for his own statements of his heavenly origin. With a limited vocabulary and a great variety of emphasis these are repeated time after time. He has been sent by the Father, he has come forth from God, he has come down from heaven, he is from above. The reiteration of these phrases is so frequent that they could not have failed to linger in the memories of those from whom the first traditions of Jesus' words were gathered. The most significant declarations, sometimes designated ' the seven I-ams '—' the Bread of Life,' ' the Light of the World,' ' before Abraham was I am,' ' the Door,' ' the Good Shepherd,' ' the Resurrection

[1] For the conditions on which this life may be obtained see Lect. VI, p. 446.

and the Life,' 'the Way, the Truth, and the Life'—express in symbolic language the affecting relations in which his help and guidance had been realised in the experience of the Fellowship; they are not the actual speech of the Teacher himself.[1]

Christianity is thus presented as a new life impersonated in Christ. As the Son of God had vouchsafed to be born in Israel he could say to the Samaritan woman, 'Salvation is of the Jews'; but in reality it had nothing to do with the 'chosen people.' It consists in the truths communicated to him and the powers and functions entrusted to him by the Father. Moses might indeed have written of him, or Isaiah have seen his glory, but only in the temporal order. His teaching was not a development out of a historic religion. It paid no attention to the traditional Commandments as a rule of life, proposed no substitutes for ancient precepts, offered no summaries of 'the law and the prophets.' 'Your law,' as he described the Mosaic Code, is simply set aside; it is valid neither on Gerizim nor on Zion. A fresh revelation takes its place; it is embodied in no legal code, it is the manifestation of the Divine Life in a person. Here is no demand for obedience to the injunctions of Scribes and Pharisees sitting on Moses' seat (Matt. xxiii. 1-2); it is commonly supposed that their claims to prescribe religious duties are peremptorily dismissed in the bitter words 'All that came before me are thieves and robbers' (x. 8).[2]

[1] The extraordinary predominance of the pronoun *ego* in the Johannine discourses compared with the Synoptic has often been remarked. A rough count gives the following number of occurrences, Mark 10, Matt. 15, Luke 9, John 113. The excess is, of course, largely due to the preoccupation of the Fourth Evangelist with the transcendental character of Jesus as Son of God, of which the previous records show barely a trace in his own language. The style was not unknown in Greek religious language; cp. the declaration ascribed to Isis in an inscription reported by Diodorus of Sicily († 27 B.C.). 'I am Isis, the queen of every land, taught by Hermes, and whatsoever things I have ordained, no one is able to loose them,' quoted by Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East* (1910), p. 135; cp. another from Ios, p. 136; and from a magical papyrus of the fourth century such phrases as 'I am the truth . . . I am he that begetteth and begetteth again. I am the grace of the Æon,' p. 139.

[2] The translation of the word *paroimia* by 'parable' (x. 6) is inexact; it corresponds rather to allegory; in the language of Jesus (xvi. 25, 29)

In these scenes of opposition the Jews are dramatically exhibited as the representatives of a hostile world which must be conquered. The world lies in the Evil One (1 John v. 19), it has its own ruler, not God but the devil. This is doubtless part of traditional Jewish theology, but (as we have seen, p. 337) it does not fit in with a Logos-made universe. He stands over against God as the

it describes something which was at first mysterious and apparently difficult to apprehend. The chapter-division at ix. 41 unfortunately misleads the English reader, who does not ordinarily realise that x. 1-18 is part of an address to the Pharisees (ix. 40-41). The allegory is now presented in two parts, 1-5 and 7-16. The first part describes a sheep-fold which may be surreptitiously entered by thieves who climb over the wall. The only person who has a right to enter is the shepherd, to whom a doorkeeper opens the door. In the second part the door-keeper disappears, and Jesus suddenly announces himself as the door. The incongruity of this identification with his character of the Shepherd begets the suspicion that in our ignorance of possible sources some confusion has taken place in the amalgamation of different presentations. Wellhausen boldly substitutes 'shepherd' for 'door' in 7; Spitta strikes out the whole passage 6-10. These critical operations seem better left alone. The vehement condemnation early led to softening corrections; versions in East and West left out 'before me,' Beza's codex omitted 'all'; and modern commentators have felt the force of the remark of Maldonatus, 'Non videntur haec cum praecedenti versu satis apte conjungi.' Who, then, are these 'thieves and robbers'? The difficulty of interpretation is enhanced by the possibility of a hidden meaning in 'came,' and by the difference of tense in 'are.' The latter implies that the 'thieves and robbers' are already there, and this leads to an identification with the Pharisees to whom the discourse is addressed in its present context. On the other hand, the word 'came' may carry with it a claim to a special mission, such as was advanced by pseudo-Messiahs or false prophets (cp. the language of Celsus, *ante*, p. 350). Most modern commentators from Réville and Father Calmes onwards limit ver. 8 to the Pharisees; Loisy, however, looks beyond the Jewish doctors to false Messiahs and teachers. So Dr. Brooke (Peake's *Commentary*), 'The actual language seems to reflect the false Messiahs of a later period.' Westcott (1908) extended the scope to 'all non-Jewish religious and philosophical systems which claimed to bring final and perfect satisfaction to men,' ignoring the significance of the Logos doctrine for the appreciation of other modes of thought. Apart from Old Testament and Synoptic applications of the figures of shepherd, sheep and wolves, must it not be said that the conception of the fold (1 and 16) implies a community of believers? In the situation attributed to Jesus there was no such community at Jerusalem; still less in his living presence was a doorkeeper needed. The whole conception belongs to a date when church officers were charged to protect the Fellowship against false teachers, the 'wolves' of Acts xx. 29, the Antichrist of 1 John iv. 1-3. The present form of the allegory is really a piece of contemporary experience thrown back into Christ's teaching as in other cases such as iii. 11, 13; ix. 4, etc. The heavenly Jesus speaks from the Evangelist's standpoint of the Church.

begetter of all the resistance of humanity to the invisible forces of light and truth. There seem to be two orders of man's nature, those who are susceptible to the working of the Spirit, and can be born out of God, and those who are hopelessly inert, immovable, incapable of response to the divine appeal. Practical experience showed that some men could awake to light and love, could receive and hold fast the truth, others were apathetic or sunk in ignorance and hate. What was the cause of these diversities? In the Old Testament the opposite issues of character and conduct are treated as results of natural freedom. The higher summons is wilfully rejected, the challenge to good is rebelliously ignored. Jesus in the same way assumes men's capacity for their own guidance, 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God.' No such quest is prescribed in the Fourth Gospel which apparently accounted for the hostility of 'the Jews' on the ground of intrinsic differences of nature. There is no attempt to explain their origin. The contrast is based on fundamental oppositions of tendency, enabling some to follow the divine leading while others are incapable of receiving it. 'Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness,' said Jesus, 'for they shall be filled.' Hunger and thirst reappear in the Johannine language, but in new applications: 'If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink'; 'I am the bread of life, he that cometh to me shall never hunger.' What can be more gracious or attractive? But these invitations and promises can only be realised on one condition—'No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him' (vi. 44). In this light 'believing,' *i.e.*, faith, which is elsewhere presented as a work of God, in the sense of a work done *for* him (vi. 29), becomes really a work wrought *by* him. You cannot hear God's words unless you are already 'out of God.' Jesus' sheep only hear his voice because they have been first given him by the Father (cp. iii. 27; vi. 65; xvii. 9-11). 'The Jews,' on the other hand, belong to an unimpressionable humanity, and are deaf to his word. 'You cannot hear' is pronounced against them as an inevitable doom (viii. 43; cp. xiv. 17). This doctrine of spiritual im-

potence explains the disappearance of the plea for the lost. Jesus does not come to seek and save. He comes to reveal the deep-seated cleavage between the children of light and the children of darkness, those born out of God, and those out of the devil.[1] 'For judgment came I into this world, that they which see not may see, and that they which see may become blind' (ix. 39). This is the most profound, but perhaps one of the least recognised, of the differences between the Synoptic presentation and the Johannine. Their pictures of the Good Shepherd are based on different ideals. The one sets out to search for the wanderer, heedless of weariness or want; the other is concerned with the safety of those within the fold, and his own power, if he lays down his life, to take it again (x. 17, 18).

V

From the scenes of conflict in the Temple Jesus passes on the last night into the communion of the farewell meal with the disciples. The vehemence of controversy is over; he is alone with the men whom he has loved; and after the symbolic act of service when—though their Master—he has washed their feet,[2] he reveals in words that can never fade from the heart of Christendom the secret of his relation to them. He has been their Teacher, he is about to die, what guidance can he give them for the future? The audience, however, is not limited to the Eleven from whom the traitor has now broken away. There is a wider apostolate of believers at work in the world, and the Son of God, about to be glorified, speaks to the whole Church. His language is full of hints of the development of Christian thought and hope; new phrases are coined, and old ideas are transmuted; the upper room expands to embrace the destinies of the world.[3]

[1] The treachery of Judas is explained first of all by the suggestion of the devil, and then by actual Satanic possession (xiii. 2, 27); to compass the death of the Son of God, the Prince of the World had to come himself.

[2] The act of a slave; cp. Abigail's message to David, 1 Sam. xxv. 41. Cp. Luke xii. 37; xxii. 27.

[3] It has been already indicated that the first discourse (xiii. 31) is concluded at xiv. 31, and a second address follows (xv.-xvi.). The final

'Ye did not choose me,' says Jesus, 'but I chose you, and appointed you that ye should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should abide' (xv. 16); but even after these years of companionship they have not known him, nor his Father either, and can still plead 'Show us the Father and it sufficeth us' (xiv. 7, 8). It is a request that causes exquisite pain, 'Have I been so long time with you and yet hast thou not known me?' For those who could not rise to the highest spiritual reality there was a lower kind of faith founded upon the works (xiv. 10, 11). But that is only the beginning of the believer's experience. As the speaker proceeds he admits that up to that time he has spoken in 'proverbs' (xvi. 25), but at length all is clear, 'Now speakest thou plainly . . . by this we believe that thou camest forth from God.' The gradual apprehension of a revelation is condensed into an evening's talk. But it is the tragedy of faith so newly won that in the hour of immediate danger it collapses, and the Son of God is left alone—no, not alone, for the Father is with him. Here is the foundation of the Church's trust, the mystery of the union of the Father and the Son. And to this is added another mystery, the union of believers with them, which is expounded in words of surpassing tenderness, as Christ prepares the disciples for the approaching separation.

The hour of departure is at hand, but the tie between them cannot be broken; 'I will not leave you orphans, I come unto you.' Is the promise fulfilled in the 'mani-

prayer in xvii. forms a third element in the whole combination to which there is nothing parallel in the First Three Gospels (*ante*, p. 223 f.). Within these divisions there are many repetitions, sometimes from slightly different points of view, as in the functions of the Paraclete, xiv. 16, 17, 26; and xvi. 7-11. There are even inconsistencies, *e.g.* xvi. 5 contradicts xiii. 36 and xiv. 5. The several portions have the air of devout meditations in which the same thoughts recur again and again, playing round the central situation, the return of Christ to the Father, and his subsequent relation to the disciples. It is even possible that additions may have been made from time to time as in other cases. The community of believers is already in view. The beautiful allegory of the vine and the branches corresponds to the Pauline conception of the Church as the body of Christ, but is worked out with another figure. (Ct. the 'Holy Vine' in *Didachê*, ix. 2.) In xv. 6 it is implied that sinners must be turned out of the community; for such an one 'the wrath of God abideth on him' (iii. 36).

festations' (xxi. 1) after death? There is surely a more lasting significance in it. He will himself ask the Father to give them another Helper.[1] He had already won that title himself in the Fellowship (1 John ii. 1); his successor will be with them for no temporary purpose. He is in reality Christ himself in a new form; as he had already designated himself 'the Truth,' the Helper will be his Spirit, the medium of his lasting presence in the Church ('for ever,' xiv. 17), the continuator of his function as Revealer. 'Apart from me,' said Jesus, 'ye can do nothing' (xv. 5);[2] the power which guides and upholds the believer is practically his. While he was with them the Spirit was not yet given (vii. 39),[3] but the promise runs 'whom the Father will send in my name,' as his representative (xiv. 26). Like Jesus (vii. 17) he will not speak from himself (xvi. 13), he will declare only the things which he has heard (cp. viii. 26); their truth belongs to them both. In the fluid state of Greek conceptions of personality, without the sharp outlines of modern individualism, it was not difficult to depict the glorified Son as still present and active in the form of Spirit among succeeding generations.[4] This is partly indicated in his function of bringing Christ's words to the disciples' remembrance (xiv. 26), as well as in the promise of future guidance into all the truth (xvi. 13). Many things remain to be told, and the continuity of the teaching implies the continuity of the Teacher. The world, indeed, under the doom of inability, cannot receive him; for spiritual

[1] On the various meanings of the term 'Paraclete' and its Philonic application, see such commentators as Réville, W. Bauer, and on the Jewish side Strack-Billerbeck. The term passed into Rabbinical use, together with its Greek opposite, *Katégor*, 'accuser.'

[2] So the Greek orator Aristides said, 'Men will never do any good thing without Athena' (W. Bauer, *in loc.*).

[3] Is this because it was really 'abiding' on himself (i. 33)? Perhaps, but it is surely not this spirit (as has been suggested) that Jesus gave up at death. The Evangelist employs the common Jewish phrase (xix. 30, Mark xv. 37; Matt. xxvii. 50; Luke xxiii. 46). Cp. *ante*, p. 363.

[4] Cp. the Pauline identification, 'The Lord is the Spirit' (2 Cor. iii. 18), and the Jewish conception of the Shekhînah, which had not, however, been manifested in a human form. A similar idea lives in the words of Jesus, Matt. xviii. 20.

insight or knowledge it has no faculty ; ' Ye know him, for he abideth with you ' (xiv. 17), as contemporary insight in the form of prophetic vision sees the Church already in possession of the heavenly gift. The practical identity of Christ and the Spirit is further implied in the threefold union to be realised (in the ancient eschatologic phrase ' in that day ') between the Father, the Son, and the disciples (xiv. 20), in which the Spirit has no share. When the promise is reaffirmed in the last solemn prayer for all future believers (xvii. 21-23) the Spirit has disappeared altogether ; in their union with the Son he is needed no more.

Under the stress laid on the teaching function of the Helper there is no hint of the varied activity recognised in the Church by the Apostle Paul ; but another duty is assigned to him as the Advocate or Protector of believers in the controversy with the Jews, in which Jesus himself had been so grievously beset. When the heavenly Son has sent him (in distinction from the Father's gift, xvi. 7 ; xiv. 16), he will conduct a kind of world-trial, another hint of his real identity with the Son as judge, though in this prosecution the Son is himself concerned (xvi. 8-11). He will ' convict the world in respect of sin, and righteousness, and judgment.' This threefold ground of accusation is expressed in the most abstract terms. But they have a most concrete application. The world which is to be thus charged is the world which hates and persecutes the Christians as it had hated Christ (xv. 18) ; it is the world which expels them from the synagogues (xvi. 2 ; cp. ix. 22), and even brings them to death—the world of Jewish animosity. The tribunal is not specified, the accused are not even summoned. But the Helper will be there to convict them on the first count ' of sin ' because of their unbelief. The second term ' of righteousness ' receives the explanation ' Because I go unto the Father.' The connexion is obscure, but the Christian teacher who had this summary for his text well knew whose righteousness was to be thus established. In spite of the question of Jesus ' Which of you convicteth me of sin ? ' (viii. 46), he had been rejected as a sinner (ix. 24). His execution

on the cross appeared to Jewish eyes to confirm the charge. But his elevation on the instrument of Death was only the symbol of his exaltation to his pristine glory ; his departure to the Father established his ' righteousness.' Lastly, the world and its ruler were judged when their victim escaped from their grasp and resumed the sublime companionship of heaven. Their hatred and hostility were condemned as the saving works of the Son of God, begun on earth, were continued ' from above.' [1] Will the mighty suit between the Church and ' the world ' ever end ? Will the world accept the verdict and learn its truth ? A possible answer to such questions must be deferred (cp. Lect. VI.). All that can be said now is that this threefold charge is not made against the whole of humanity in its future history, it belongs to the contemporary outlook of the Evangelist.

Around the Teacher are the believers who abide in his word (viii. 31). The faith of that particular group is indeed soon turned into antagonism, founded on the kind of perverse misunderstanding which again and again provokes bitter opposition. Those who are truly his disciples shall know the truth, and the truth shall make them free. As ' the truth ' stands for Christ, the Evangelist is here translating the Pauline doctrine of liberation from the Law (Gal. v. 1) into his own idiom. But the new converts have not the clue to interpretation, and suppose him to be darkly impugning their national liberty. We need not follow the painful dispute which culminates in attempted violence, when the Jews take up stones and Jesus vanishes. It is enough to note that the bond-service of the Law means the bond-service of sin, and from that slavery the only enfranchisement is through the Son.[2] Yet it is one of the characteristic elements of Johannine thought that the life of discipleship is a life of obedience

[1] The judgment thus effected by the Spirit-Helper is analogous to the action of the Spirit of the Lord (Wisdom of Sol. i. 7 ff., cp. W. Bauer).

[2] With viii. 34, 35 cp. Gal. iv. 1-7, Rom. vi. 16, and the argument in Rom. vii. 7 ff. on the connexion between the Law and sin. The influence of Pauline thought is manifest here in the terminology. Prof. W. Bauer has collected an interesting series of parallels in Stoic ethical writers.

to Christ's commands. The mystery of inward union finds a very plain issue. 'If ye abide in me and my words abide in you' has its practical counterpart, 'If ye keep my commandments ye shall abide in my love' (xv. 7, 10), and this moral relation of loyal obedience to another's commands subsists even on the part of the Son towards the Father with the same consequence that it ensures for the Son the Father's love. The Johannine subordination of the Son to the Father—'The Father is greater than I' (xiv. 28)—could hardly receive more significant expression. This aspect of Christ's teaching is so marked in contrast with the Pauline 'life in Spirit' that it has been sometimes designated 'a new legalism.' But it is only so interpreted by a false emphasis. The commandments that are to be kept through love of Christ are after all but one, 'that ye love one another.'[1] And that is no arbitrary rule; it rests on the natural response to the love which Jesus had himself felt towards those whom he had chosen. Of that love he is about to give the supreme proof (xv. 12, 13); he approaches it with the memory of a strange happiness in his twofold relation to the God above him and the disciples around him: 'These things have I spoken to you that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be fulfilled' (xv. 11). So he can face even that terrible hour when those whom he has at last won after years of labour will suddenly fall away from him; and can give to all fainting and endangered souls the sublimest encouragement ever placed on human lips—

'These things I have spoken unto you that in me ye may have peace. In the world ye have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.'

[1] It has often been noticed that this confines love to the brethren (cp. 1 John iii. 13, 14 and *passim*) within the community. It does not include the world which hates and persecutes (Matt. v. 44) or the men of alien and hostile nationality (Luke x. 36, 37).

LECTURE VI

THE WAY OF SALVATION

The farewell meal was over ; the last words of tenderness and encouragement had been spoken ; the Teacher left the supper room with his disciples. But one more act remained for Jesus—to die. The death of Christ is presented in various aspects in the New Testament ; that the Messiah should suffer was at first a bewildering problem. The earliest solution was found in its supposed conformity to prophetic testimony. That ' Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures ' was the fundamental truth which the Apostle Paul had ' received,' it was the centre of the message which he was sent to ' deliver ' (1 Cor. xv. 3). This interpretation of what at first appeared an overwhelming catastrophe was even attributed to Jesus himself, as he walked with the two disciples to Emmaus, ' Behoved it not the Christ to suffer these things, and to enter into his glory ? ' (Luke xxiv. 26). The fulfilment of prophecy is a motive which only rarely enters into the recital of the Fourth Evangelist, but its presence in significant details of the final scene shows that he, too, could use it after his own fashion (xix. 24, 28, 36).[1] It may be anticipated, therefore, that the cross will be interpreted in his narrative from different points of view, reflecting the experience of the Church in his own time. Perhaps the main clue is to be found in the root ideas of the two great creators of Christian theology. The Apostle Paul proclaims a Gospel of Reconciliation ; the Fourth Gospel expounds a Gospel of Revelation. The one

[1] Cp. xii. 38 ; xv. 25 ; xvii. 12 ; of Jesus' own word, xviii. 9, 32.

describes a great atonement, by which believers were 'bought with a price'; the other displays Jesus as engaged in 'showing the Father.'

I

The Synoptic tradition attributes to Jesus repeated announcements of his impending rejection by the priestly authorities at Jerusalem, and the fatal issue of his enterprise. But these warnings all follow the close of his Galilean ministry. He has been recognised by the Twelve as the Messiah; he has resolved to present himself at the centre of the nation's religious life; he has faced the consequences even to the details of the Roman scourge (Mark viii. 31; ix. 31; x. 33, 34). The Fourth Evangelist, on the other hand, finds the secret of the cross already communicated by Jesus to a solitary enquirer at Jerusalem in the dead of night on his first visit. 'As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up' (or 'exalted' iii. 14). His elevation on the cross is already part of a divine necessity, and finds its providential type in the brazen serpent which Moses reared upon a standard, so that the Israelites bitten by fiery serpents might look on it and live.[1] Given historically by the Synoptic tradition, the Messiah's death has for its purpose 'that whosoever believeth in him may have eternal life.' The path of faith is freely thrown open by it to all. Only when he had returned to the heavenly realm could his messengers carry forth the truth which would liberate the world from the evil power of sin. How Nicodemus received this declaration we are not told; he disappears in darkness and silence. To the inquisitive Jews at a later stage a similar declaration is repeated, 'When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall ye know that I AM,' and the mystery of his union with the Father will be revealed. He only speaks what he has been taught by him, and in his mission he is not alone, for the

[1] Numbers xxi. 9. The analogy was early employed by Christian writers (*Barnabas* xii. 5-7, Justin, 1 *Apol.* 60, *Dial.* 94, 112), but without any reference to the Fourth Gospel.

Father is with him (viii. 28, 29), a lesson which he vainly strives to impart to the disciples who will desert him on the fatal night (xvi. 32).

Confident in the future of Christianity he once more declares 'I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me' (xii. 31, 32). Instead of a humiliation—meekly endured to break the power of Jewish law (Gal. iii. 13)—the cross becomes the point of universal attraction; it is the means by which the Son of God divests himself of bodily limitations and re-enters the heavenly life which was the Father's eternal gift to him. The double meaning with which the evangelist so often invests his words carries up his thought to that 'exaltation' by which Jesus was installed as Prince and Saviour at God's right hand, or in Pauline language becomes 'Lord, to the glory of God the Father' (Acts ii. 33; v. 31; Philip. ii. 11). It is not, however, the Father only who is thus 'glorified.' The heavenly life which the Son had lived before the great act of condescension and obedience by which he 'became flesh,' was a life of glory. The incarnation might veil but could not wholly conceal it. In the miracle of Cana he first allowed it to appear (ii. 11). It is understood as the background of all his 'works,' and is openly disclosed beforehand as the reason why Lazarus is allowed to die, 'for the glory of God that the Son of God may be glorified thereby' (xi. 4). The word was in common use in the First Three Gospels as tradition described the wonder and praise which rose to God from the spectators of the healing energy of Jesus.[1] It is transferred to Jesus, but with a new application. There was as yet no Spirit, remarks the Evangelist (vii. 39), because Jesus was not yet glorified (cp. xii. 16). At length the hour so long foreseen (p. 378) arrives, 'that the Son of Man should be glorified.'[2]

[1] Mark ii. 12 and parallels; Matt. xv. 31; Luke vii. 16, xiii. 13, xvii. 15; cp. xxiii. 47.

[2] xii. 23. The choice of the term 'Son of Man' rather than 'Son of God' is perhaps due to a remembrance that the Synoptic predictions employ this term. It has already been used in a similar connexion (viii. 28). This seems a sufficient explanation of its use in xii. 34, where it is equivalent to the Messiah whose lasting rule had been predicted in Scripture. Prof. Bultmann has inferred from this occur-

Death is in sight, and in the timeless order of the divine 'must' it may be treated as already present. With greater emphasis it is affirmed at the supper table when the traitor has left it, 'Now is the Son of Man glorified,' and it is added in view of the constant obedience of the Son to the Father that 'God is glorified in him' as he fulfils the divine purpose for which he has been sent. As all that he has done has been wrought through the Father's power working within him, so his submission to the cross redounds to God's glory, while it is also the divine means of his own restoration to his former splendour. Accordingly the last prayer runs:

'Father, the hour is come: glorify thy Son, that the Son may glorify thee: even as thou gavest him authority over all flesh, that whatsoever thou hast given him, to them he should give eternal life.... I glorified thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which thou hast given me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was' (xvii. 1-5).[1]

So he leaves the chamber already conqueror over the world of sin and death. From Pilate he accepts the title 'king,' but his rule will be in the realm on high. From the cross—no scene of divine abandonment and desolation even in the pain of predestined thirst—he looks on the mother who had made his work on earth possible, and after providing her with another son knows that his mission is over, cries 'It is finished,' and gives up his spirit.[2]

For what purpose, then, did the manifestation of the Son of God take place? The great question *Cur filius Dei homo* had already been answered by the Apostle Paul. He was sent in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin; and he was born under the law that he might 'buy out'

rence that a written source founded on the Anthropos-myth (see note to Lect. IV, p. 288) lay behind the scene xii. 23-36 (*Z.N.T.W.* 1925, p. 141).

[1] This language of 'glorification' belonged also to the vocabulary of other cults. A prayer to the 'Lady Isis of many names and forms' ran: 'Glorify thou me, as I have glorified the name of thy Son Horus.' Kenyon, *Greek Pap.*, i. p. 100, cited by Reitzenstein, *Poimandres*, p. 22 [5].

[2] xix. 30, on the significance of the phrase cp. p. 363.

those who were under its bondage so that they might receive the adoption of sons[1] (Rom. viii. 3; Gal. iv. 4). How the law's power was broken by his execution on the cross, so that the way of reconciliation was opened to the Gentile as well as the Jew, was elaborately explained out of the Law itself (Gal. iii. 13, 14). Here lay the chief stress of the Pauline Gospel. But of this aspect of Christ's death the Fourth Evangelist says nothing. The controversy in which the heroic missionary stood forth as the champion of liberty has been so long decided that the head of the Jewish priesthood can himself predict its result, and declare that it was expedient for Jesus to die not for Israel only, but also that he might gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad (xii. 51, 52).[2]

The purpose of Jesus' work, the significance of his mission, is presented in the Johannine teaching from various points of view To the representative of the Roman sovereignty he makes the lowly claim, 'To this end was I born, and to this end am I come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth' (xviii. 37). Hence the repeated emphasis on his words, on keeping them, abiding in them, as means of saving knowledge. In virtue of the close connexion between truth and the inward energy known as 'life,' he can say 'I am come that they may have life, and may have it abundantly' (x. 10); and this element of life which holds within it all moral and spiritual graces, affections and powers, bringing the gift of immortality, is concentrated in Jesus (who has himself received it from the Father), so that he can describe himself as 'the Bread of Life,' 'the Resurrection and the Life,' 'the Truth and the Life.' These symbols, endeared by long use to the imagination and piety of Christendom, sprang from the first vivid contact with an unexampled force and quality of being. In our modern Christianity we are often conscious that there are other elements in

[1] On the technical use of the verb translated 'redeem' (Gal. iv. 4) in inscriptional formulae of adoption cp. Deissmann, *Bible Studies*, p. 239; *St. Paul* (1912), p. 152 f.

[2] Cp. *ante*, p. 383.

it beside the personality of the Founder. That is not the only mode of access to the highest reality. We can no longer accept the exclusive claim 'No man cometh to the Father but by me' (xiv. 6). But in the fervour of primitive devotion as the believer learned to 'do all in the name of the Lord Jesus,' the 'love, joy, peace,' which he realised within the Brotherhood seemed the immediate gift from the exalted Christ.

But while the communication of 'life' remained the fundamental purpose of the mission of the Son, before it could be realised the good and evil elements in the world must first be separated. In other words, the world must be judged. The Father himself judges no one; he has committed all judgment to the Son (v. 22). For this end he is endowed with the needful authority as the Son of Man (v. 27).[1] 'For judgment,' therefore, says Jesus, 'am I come into the world' (ix. 39). Yet that is not in itself the ultimate aim. With paradoxical emphasis it is declared that God did not send the Son to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through him (v. 17), and Jesus finally affirms this as his own object, 'I came not to judge the world, but to save the world' (xii. 47). In this capacity he is actually recognised by the Samaritans when they have heard him teach (iv. 42), and that is the typical issue of Christian experience, 'We have beheld and bear witness that the Father has sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world' (1 John iv. 14). Various ideas gather round the conception of salvation. For the Apostle Paul Christ was first of all the deliverer from 'the Coming Wrath' (1 Thess. i. 10), and this ancient figure still looms in the Evangelist's background (iii. 36), but does not dominate the whole scene.[2] How was the deliverance effected, through what agency, and by what means? For what were the saved destined, what was the privilege awarded to them? And lastly what was its scope, how many would share it, would it really at last include the world?

The term Saviour was no peculiar property either of Jew or Christian. It was of age-long use in Gentile theo-

[1] Cp. pp. 348, 353. [2] Cp. p. 348.

logy as well. Not only was it applied to the deities of popular worship all the way round the Eastern Mediterranean, in Egypt, Syria, Asia Minor, Greece, it had become the title of the sovereigns of the earth. At Ephesus Julius Cæsar had been designated 'God manifest, and the common Saviour of human life.' Upon the Nile in the island of Philæ Augustus was honoured as 'great Saviour Zeus'; Olympia was proud to call him 'Saviour of the Greeks and of the whole world.'[1] He had been 'sent' as a Saviour to put an end to war, he was the Saviour of the whole human race.[2] Here was a secular universalism of which the Roman Emperor was the divine agent; and this conception of imperial salvation was not without its influence on Christian hope. The term of course implies rescue from danger, and in the sphere of religion the element of danger lies in what we know as evil, translated from personal suffering in want or pain, or from social injustice, violence, oppression, into the moral perils of ignorance and sin. It is significant that in the Fourth Gospel neither the Baptist nor Jesus bids his countrymen repent. There is no summons to 'turn and become as little children.' Jesus does not call the sinner. The reason is that on the basis of the distinction between the flesh and the spirit there is a fundamental opposition between two modes of being. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that is the condition of ordinary humanity. The flesh is dull, inert, unresponsive, insensible to light and truth. It belongs to the realm of darkness. To judge after the flesh is to be hopelessly wrong; it is the prey of falsehood, the instrument of the lie. All kinds of unlawful appetites are seated in it; the lusts of the flesh, of the eyes, and the vainglory of life, are the inborn sources of sin. Behind the bodily organs they are traced back to an ever active personal source: 'Ye are out of the Devil, and the lusts of your father it is your will to do' (viii. 44). Here is a kind of fatalistic dualism, for

[1] Cp. Wendland, *Zeitschrift für N.T. Wiss.*, 1904, p. 335 ff. Cp. J. E. C., *Phases of Early Christianity*, pp. 12-14.

[2] Cp. Hiller von Gaertringen, *Inschriften von Priene* (1906), p. 80, No. 105; and *ante*, p. 350.

the opposing Jews were not responsible for this descent. Apparently they could not help themselves. To such moral struggle as Paul described (Rom. vii.) there is no reference; the promise of freedom through the Truth (viii. 32, 36) belongs to a different order of religious thought. How far John had travelled beyond his great predecessor may be seen in his identification of sin with 'lawlessness' (1 John iii. 4), and the repeated reference to Jesus' 'commands.' The sphere of flesh is opposed to that of spirit as darkness and falsehood are opposed to light and truth, and this realm of gloom and lies, of error and deceit, is identified with the world. The 'world' has two aspects; it is the world of external sense, including all objects of human desire, the world which is destined to disappear and carry with it all the things that stimulate appetite and the craving for wealth and power; and secondly, it is the moral world, the world of man, the world which is to be judged or saved according to the point of view, the world whose works are evil, whose principle is death, whose only feeling is hatred of the good. Here is the vast realm of creation, physical and human, apparently all condemned. The joy of the Hundred-and-fourth Psalm, the recognition of cosmic order and law in Proverbs viii., find no counterpart here. The world is hostile, it must be overcome, and it is well that it should perish. It has its own Ruler, who must be cast out. This piece of traditional theology does not fit in with a Logos made universe. The Adversary comes with a last onset against the Son of God which will be fruitless because there is nothing in Jesus of which he can lay hold. He might enter into Judas, he could find no footing in the Christ. So he is vanquished by the Messiah, not as in the serried ranks of angels on the battlefield of heaven, but by what seems at first his own triumph as his intended victim hangs upon the cross. But this is in reality his judgment, for it was by this path that Christ entered into his glory, and the spread of his saving work began. The apostles who receive the Spirit (xx. 22) become the continuators of his activity. The Messianic war with the demons in the Synoptics is translated into the conflict of the Church with the world,

and the believers are called to carry on the Master's victory. As Christ conquered the world, so have the young men conquered the Evil One, and this, says the Elder on behalf of the Fellowship—' This is the conquest that has conquered the world, even our faith ' (1 John ii. 14, v. 4).

The language of the Evangelist moves continually from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven. There is a time order for the events of our experience, there is a timeless order in which purpose and accomplishment are viewed together. ' Now is the judgment of this world,' says Jesus as he faces the ' hour ' (xii. 31), ' the prince of this world hath been judged ' (xvi. 11). But in the time-order the death of Jesus serves as an example. The good shepherd, he declares, lays down his life for the sheep which belong to him. The hireling flees and leaves the flock he does not own to the wolf's attack. What was the danger in the Evangelist's view? The language hints at false leaders who to escape persecution sought refuge in flight. ' I lay down my life,' says Jesus, and he tells the disciples later that he does it as the supreme proof of love for his friends, and his friends include all who do what he commands (x. 17 ; xv. 13, 14). How does he thereby benefit them ? The shepherd who fell a prey to the wolf could no longer protect his sheep. The clue is perhaps to be found in the declaration that he has power to take it again (x. 18). In resuming the heavenly life he enters on a wider pastorate. Only after death as the truth is carried forth into the world can he find the ' other sheep ' who are to be brought into the fold of faith. But the force of the example received its point from the Elder, ' Hereby know we love, because he laid down his life for us ; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren ' (1 John iii. 16).[1]

[1] The first words (as in 2) express the general Christian consciousness, but it may be that in the latter the Elder glances at the Church officers, against whom (like Ignatius and Polycarp) persecution might be especially directed. In x. 18 the interesting variant ' took it ' refers to his voluntary relinquishment of his heavenly glory to ' become flesh.' His whole earthly life was a continuous act of loving self-denial. It may be noted that the verbs in 17 are identical with those in xiii. 4 and 12, applied to the garments of Jesus. Is it fanciful

One more aspect is presented in the announcement by which the Baptist introduces Jesus to his countrymen, 'Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world' (i. 22; cp. 36). Jesus has been revealed to him as the future Baptizer with the Holy Spirit, the agency by which the world's sin should be at last removed.[1] This is not a single act but a continuous process. It is proclaimed as the perpetual function of 'the Christ, the Son of God.' No limit of time attaches to it, nor any designation of place. If it may begin on earth, during his mortal career, it may be transferred to heaven. Thence, after his exaltation, he will confer on believers the gift of eternal life (iii. 14, 15); so enfolding them with consecrating grace and truth that they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of his or the Father's hand (x. 28, 29). In this vision of sanctifying activity the cross is simply the means of securing its renewal from the bosom of God. Viewed in the perspective of the eternal, the world's sin appears as a vast abstraction. Those who saw it all around them in a thousand forms of passion or deceit had no doubt of its individual significance. 'Ye know,' says the Elder, 'that he was manifested to take away sins' (1 John iii. 5).[2] The manifestation will be repeated, and every one who hopes for it prepares himself by self-purification. Is he deprived of heavenly aid? The Helper, who is really another form of Christ, no other than Christ's own Spirit of Truth, will be his guide, and by knowledge of the truth he will be gradually freed from sin.[3]

But the Baptist's words probably contain a second and even a third reference, after the manner of the Evangelist

to see here a symbolic reference to the vesture laid aside at death and resumed in glory, as the means by which the sacrament of baptism acquired its efficacy? Cp. below, p. 461.

[1] The verb appears in the margin in the sense 'beareth,' and this is explained below. It is enough to note here that its use in the Gospel elsewhere confirms the rendering of the text, *e.g.* ii. 16; x. 18; xi. 39 ff.; xv. 2; xvi. 22; xvii. 15; xix. 15, 38; xx. 1, 2, 13. In v. 8-12 it means as in Mark ii. 9, 11, 12, 'take up,' cp. John viii. 59.

[2] For a similar passage of thought from the abstract to the concrete cp. viii. 21, 24.

[3] On viii. 31-36, cp. above, p. 395.

who hides one meaning within another. The Lamb of God is his gift to the world, like that other Lamb (the Greek word is not the same) seen by the prophet John before the throne in heaven,[1] who with his blood had bought for God men of every tribe and tongue and people and nation.[2] This is not the figure of the Gospel, which is unmistakably identified in xix. 36 with the Paschal lamb (cp. p. 373). The Paschal lamb, however, was not a piacular sacrifice. The passover commemorated a great deliverance. The slaughter of the lamb was presented as originally the householder's act, who was bidden to sprinkle the blood on the door-posts of his house as a sign to 'the destroyer' that he should not enter to smite the first-born within (Exod. xii. 22, 23). Other ideas might have associated themselves with the celebration—it had become a sacrifice (Mark xiv. 12)—but the idea of atonement was not (it seems generally agreed) among them. It was a festival of liberation. On that far-distant night, to be kept for ever in national remembrance, the children of Israel had marched forth from slavery into freedom. The children of God, in the teaching of the Apostle Paul, had in like manner emerged from the servitude of sin into a glorious liberty. He does not indeed apply his incidental reference to Christ as the passover to the great deliverance of those who became 'slaves to righteousness' (Rom. vi. 16-23), a kind of bondage which was in reality true freedom. But it is not impossible that the Evangelist in employing the Pauline symbols (viii. 34-36) may have combined the figure of the Passover lamb with the idea of the liberation of believers from sin's mastery.

There was yet, however, another Lamb in prophetic imagination. The lamb that was led unprotesting to the slaughter had supplied the pictorial description of that ancient servant of Yahweh on whom was laid the chastisement of his people's peace (Isai. liii. 7). The early Church had soon identified the stricken figure with their

[1] Rev. v. Cp. *ante*, p. 101.

[2] For the verb cp. 1 Cor. vi. 20, vii. 23, a metaphor never used by the Evangelist.

suffering Master, and the Evangelist—making the same citation as the Apostle Paul—shows that he, too, accepted the current recognition.[1] But it is with a difference. The verb rendered 'taketh away' in conformity with Johannine usage elsewhere may be traced back to the Hebrew phrase commonly rendered 'bear the iniquity.' It carries within it two different meanings.[2] To 'lift up' may mean to 'take on oneself,' *i.e.*, to 'become responsible for,' as when Aaron is said to 'bear the iniquity of the holy things' (Exod. xxviii. 38), and hence to 'bear guilt' or 'sin' (Isai. liii. 12) for others. But the primitive idea of 'lifting' may be applied in another way to indicate removal, the 'lifting' of iniquity from the transgressor is accomplished by forgiveness. Now the Johannine verb (which elsewhere in the Gospel means 'remove,' p. 406) is never used in the Greek version of the Old Testament in the first sense of 'bearing'; it occurs as 'pardon,' 'forgive' in 1 Sam. xv. 25, xxv. 28. In the solemn words of the Baptist there may be an indirect reference to the 'lamb' and its meek submission to its fate; but the function predicted for the Messianic Son of God is not that of vicarious endurance, it is the splendid victory over the whole world's sin.[3]

II

By what means, then, was the new convert brought into the sphere of salvation, and with what result in his own person? The answer to such questions is full of difficulty; the materials for deciding it are scanty, and have been differently interpreted from opposite points of view; the language of our earliest witness, the Apostle

[1] John xii. 38; Rom. x. 16. Cp. Isai. liii. 4; Matt. viii. 17; 1 Pet. ii. 24; Isai. liii. 7, Rev. v. 6, 12; Isai. liii. 7, 8; Acts viii. 32, 33; Isai. liii. 9; 1 Pet. ii. 22; Isai. liii. 12, Luke xxii. 37; Isai. liii. 12, 6. Rom. iv. 25. C. H. Toy, *Quotations in the N.T.* (New York, 1884). In his use of the Greek word *amnos* (contrasted with the Apocalyptic *arnion*) John agrees with the Septuagint translators of Isai. liii.

[2] Cp. the Oxford *Hebr. and Engl. Lexicon*; Strack-Billerbeck, ii. p. 363 ff.

[3] On the connexion of Christ's death with the sacraments see p. 461; and on 'propitiation,' the Epilogue, 'The Johannine Letters.'

Paul, being by no means altogether consistent. Two rites appear in his letters to be well established in the Churches, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. How far are they recognised, and with what meaning, in the Fourth Gospel ?

The modern reader of the New Testament who has been more or less familiar with its documents since his childhood, can with difficulty realise the immense novelty of early Christian experience. Partly through his habit of limiting his attention to his favourite devotional passages, partly through ignorance of contemporary forms of thought and practice, he fails to apprehend the full meaning of its vivid and passionate phrases. He can more or less realise the plea of Jesus that new wine must be put into new wine skins (Mark ii. 22) ; but he with difficulty grasps the idea that the first disciples believed themselves to be already in a measure living in the Kingdom of whose advent first John and then Jesus and his apostles had been the heralds. Jewish hope looked for the creation in Israel of a holy spirit, so that they should all be called children of the living God, and a renewal in all his works of a righteous nature ' so that they should not sin in their whole nature for ever.' Enoch announced that for the elect there should be ' light and grace and peace,' wisdom should be bestowed upon them, and they should never sin again.[1] To the victor in life's warfare a new name is promised—for has he not won a new nature ?—a new song celebrates the worship of the Lamb ; a new Jerusalem, a new earth, even a new heaven, display the fulfilment of the Almighty's declaration, ' Behold, I make all things new.' [2]

In the language attributed to Jesus at the last supper (Mark xiv. 24, 25) he was founding a ' new covenant ' like that announced by the prophet Jeremiah, when all Israel

[1] *Jubilees*, i. 23, 25 ; v. 12 ; *Enoch*, v. 7, 8. Cp. *Baruch*, xxxii. 6, ' the Mighty One will renew his creation.' This renewal is designated ' the regeneration,' Matt. xix. 28, where the Evangelist employs the Greek term *palingenesia* (also used in Pythagorean and Stoic philosophy ; literally ' re-birth.' It describes the renovation of physical nature, not spiritual quickening as in Tit. iii. 5.

[2] Rev. ii. 17 ; iii. 12 ; v. 9 ; xxi. 1, 5. Cp. *ante*, p. 178.

should 'know the Lord,' their iniquity should be forgiven, and their sin remembered no more (xxxi. 31-34). The first disciples at Jerusalem, in responding to Peter's summons to repent and be baptised, were promised forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit.[1] By the end of the first century this conjunction had become well established. Possessed of this divine energy believers seemed already to 'inherit the kingdom' by anticipation. Some of its privileges and endowments were already theirs. Even the language of Jesus was insensibly modified to suggest the identification of the Church with the kingdom.[2] The author of the homily known as the Epistle to the Hebrews looks with sadness on those who had once been enlightened, had shared in Holy Spirit and tasted the powers of the Coming Age, and then fell away beyond the possibility of renewed repentance (vi. 4-6). The Church, then, gradually took its place as an enduring institution, and the mode of entrance to it was through Baptism. This is the position implied in the Fourth Gospel and the associated letters.

At his first visit to Jerusalem, says the Evangelist, Jesus gained many believers by 'the signs which he did' (ii. 23). They are not enumerated or described, and the kind of faith which they awakened was of the fitful unstable character illustrated again and again in the subsequent narrative till the fatal cry arises 'Crucify him.' Out of this group emerges a figure, timid yet loyal in secret (vii. 50; xix. 39), the Pharisee Nicodemus, 'a ruler of the Jews' or member of the Sanhedrin (iii. 1). Under the veil of night (though no formal opposition has yet made an interview with Jesus dangerous) he seeks him out, and professes his respect for him as a teacher come from God, whose divine mission and support are

[1] Baptism and the Spirit are here closely united. But the representations of Acts are not uniform. Philip the Evangelist baptizes Samaritan converts (viii. 12), but they do not receive the Spirit till the arrival of Peter and John (14-17); while Cornelius and his friends receive it on 'hearing the word,' and thus prove their fitness for baptism, x. 44-47.

[2] This is noticeable in some of the touches in Matthew, cp. Montefiore, *Synoptic Gospels*, ii. p. 638, on xiii. 18, 19 (Wellhausen) and p. 645.

proved by his ' signs.' They are matter of public repute, ' We know,' he says politely. To this greeting Jesus makes no direct reply; he at once opens a discourse on the traditional theme of his Galilean ministry in the preceding Gospels, the Kingdom of God. It is the sole mention of the great hope in the whole narrative. Then, Jesus had warned his disciples, ' Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in nowise enter into the kingdom of heaven ' (Matt. xviii. 3). The condition is far harder now, ' Except a man be born from above, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.' It is a strange and mysterious demand. But the phrase is after all ambiguous, for the Greek word (*anōthen*) is rendered in the Revisers' text ' anew ' ; [1] it may be employed in both fields of space and time. Nicodemus understands it in its crudest sense of repetition, and to his senseless question Jesus replies with a fresh condition, ' Except a man be born of Water and Spirit he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.' The allusion to baptism has been universally recognised ; the Evangelist presents in the first appearance of Jesus as Teacher what he regards as the distinctive feature of Christianity.[2] There are two orders of being, flesh and spirit ; they are radically different ; on the side of the flesh are ignorance, falsehood, and all the lusts of evil ; the spirit is of heavenly origin and comes from the world of light and truth and life. It is to this world that the Kingdom of God belongs, and the only access to it is through birth from above.[3] Spirit and flesh are thus absolutely opposed. The action of Spirit is as incalculable

[1] The ambiguity is probably deliberate, and is reflected in the different translations of early versions. In iii. 31 and xix. 11 the meaning ' from above ' is clear.

[2] There has been some critical suspicion of the water. The reversal of the order of the two terms in the Sinaitic Syriac and other considerations have led to the suggestion that the water might be a later addition ; cp. Wendt, *The Gospel according to St. John* (1902), p. 120 ; Lake, *Leyden Inaugural*, p. 15 ; Merx, *Die vier Kanonischen Evangelien*, iii. (1911), p. 55 ff., where further peculiar additions in both Syriac and Old Latin texts in ver. 6 are set forth.

[3] For ' marvel not,' cp. 1 John iii. 13. ' Ye ' addresses a wider circle of hearers than the solitary Nicodemus. ' Must ' implies a divine necessity, as in 14, iv. 24 ; ix. 4 ; x. 16 ; xii. 34 ; xx. 9. For the literary form of the questions (4 and 9), cp. v. 44 ; vi. 52 ; ix. 16.

as that of its physical counterpart (expressed by the same Hebrew or Greek term), wind. Over the heaving waters of the deep the Wind or Spirit of God once brooded at the beginning of the world's creation ; in like manner the creation of the children of God was due to the same Spirit, coming as unexpectedly as the wind whose source no one knew and whose course no one could follow. The wind could indeed be recognised by its sound ; and to the soul of the believer the Spirit brought tidings of invisible things which were the veritable utterance of God (cp. i. 12, 13). To the helpless question of Israel's teacher, 'How can these things be?' the ascended Jesus appeals to the witness of Christian experience (cp. *ante*, p. 225), 'We speak that we do know, and testify of what we have seen' ; and he adds, 'If I told you earthly things (when had he done so ?) and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things ?'

The birth from above, or, as it is elsewhere phrased, 'out of God,' seems strangely linked with a physical act, immersion in water. How could the incalculable advent of the Spirit be attached to a dip in a stream ? But as the mode of entrance into the Christian Fellowship baptism had its analogies with the rites of other religious communities, which in various forms associated inward change with outward performance. The underlying ideas of such rites may be traced far back into the lower culture. In primitive social development a time arrives when the youths, ere they enter on manhood, must be instructed in their future privileges and duties as members of the tribe. They must learn its traditions, prepare for its responsibilities, become acquainted with its customs, rites, magic, and religion. The process often involves severe and painful ordeals, and is expressed in strangely significant symbols. 'Almost universally,' we are told,[1] 'initiation rites include a mimic representation of the death and resurrection of the novice. The new life to which he awakes after initiation is one utterly forgetful

[1] Hutton Webster, *Primitive Secret Societies* (New York, 1908), p. 38.

of the old ; a new name, a new language, and new privileges, are its natural accompaniments.' The resurrection is sometimes viewed as a new birth.[1] Bathing is still part of the ritual of purification from sin prescribed by the ancient Indian law-books, and when the youthful Brāhman was led to his preceptor to be received into the company of the ' twice-born,' blessings were uttered over the sacred thread with which he was invested, and holy water was sprinkled on it. The disciple of the Good Religion (of Zoroaster) must in like manner become *navazud*, ' new-born ' or regenerate.[2]

Similar ideas were not wanting in some of the ' mysteries ' which had established themselves at the beginning of our era all round the Mediterranean. For hundreds of years initiation in the famous rites at Eleusis on the coast of Attica, twelve miles from Athens along the Sacred Way, had been regarded as the path to a sure and certain hope of a blessed immortality. ' We at last possess reasons,' said Cicero, ' why we should live, and we are not only eager to live, but we cherish a better hope in death.' The tombs of some who had travelled from Alexandria to be initiated bore the prayer that the departed ' might reach the regions of the holy ones,' and an instructor in the solemn secrets who died in the tenth year of his office, bore witness in his epitaph that he found ' Death no more an evil, but a blessing.' [3]

' Isis,' according to the pious Plutarch, contemporary with the Fourth Evangelist, ' invented the remedy which confers immortality.' For more than two centuries her worship had been carried from city to city round the Eastern Mediterranean, and was at last securely established in Rome under the patronage of the Emperor Caligula about A.D. 38. Lofty ideas were associated with her sovereignty. ' Dedicate thyself to the ministry of

[1] In the *Golden Bough*, ' Balder the Beautiful,' vol. ii. (1913), p. 225 ff., Sir James Frazer has collected a multitude of illustrative examples, from Australia, New Guinea, West Africa, and America ; cp. especially pp. 247, 261, 276.

[2] Cp. J. E. C., *Phases of Early Christianity*, p. 229.

[3] Farnell, *The Cults of the Greek States*, iii. pp. 191, 347 ; J. E. C., *Phases*, pp. 215-218.

our faith,' says the priest to Lucius,[1] ' and take upon thee the voluntary yoke of service. For when thou hast begun to be the servant of the goddess, then shalt thou perceive more fully the greatness of thy liberty.' Its demands for purity and abstinence were austere, and candidates often waited months or even years for the summons of the Deity. The ritual involved an act of self-dedication to a kind of voluntary death followed by rebirth. ' I drew nigh to the confines of death, I trod the threshold of Proserpine, I was borne through all the elements and returned to earth again.' He was *quodam modo renatus*, ' in a certain fashion reborn.' He had been mystically identified with the sun-god whom he had beheld in midnight vision, the mysterious Deity for ever passing to the under-world and daily reborn, the source of all the energies of the universe, and was thus endowed with immortality. In the strange text designated a ' Mithras Liturgy ' by Dieterich (1903) the believer closes with the declaration that he is born again, he has died and been born with the birth that gives life.[2]

Once more the doctrine of rebirth meets us in the field of religious and philosophical mysticism. In the Orphic mysteries the purified soul was welcomed with the greeting ' Thou hast become a god (divine) out of a man.' To become divine was the object of the Hermetic training, and two of the surviving documents throw a valuable light upon its significance. It is founded on the fundamental distinction between two modes of being, the corporeal

[1] The hero of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*, xi, xv (tr. Butler) ; for an account of his initiation cp. *ante*, p. 280. Moret, *Kings and Gods of Egypt*, chap. v.

[2] On similar ideas in Mithraism, the rite of the *taurobolium*, etc., cp. *Phases*, pp. 226, 230 ; Cumont, *The Oriental Religions in Roman Paganism* (Chicago, 1911). The student has now a comprehensive summary of the whole evidence in the recent treatise of Prof. Angus, *The Mystery-Religions and Christianity* (1925). It is no longer possible airily to dismiss the idea of ' regeneration ' in Hellenistic communities as ' probably borrowed [*i.e.* from Christianity] by the New Paganism ' (Bigg, on 1 Pet. i. 3 in *International Critical Commentary*). In Dieterich's text the believer prays (p. 4) that he may be presented for the birth to immortality, that he may be born again in mind (or understanding) and dedicate himself, and that the sacred Spirit may breathe through him.

and the incorporeal. The world, Hermes tells his son Tat, has been made by God with Reason (*Logos*), and man's function is to contemplate his works, and thus come to know his Maker. For this end God filled a great Bowl with Mind and sent it down to earth, and bade a herald summon men to 'baptise' (dip) themselves therein. As many as thus partook of the heavenly gift became as immortal gods to mortal men. But the discipline was hard for it required them first to hate their bodies if they would ascend to see the Good.[1] In the discourse on Rebirth (Lib. xiii.), which appears (in Prof. Scott's view) to issue from a religious community, Tat is puzzled to know from what womb a man can be born again and from what seed. The womb, he is told, is Wisdom, the Begetter is God, and the ministrant is some man who is a son of God. But Rebirth cannot be taught, it can only be experienced. He to whom it is given feels within him a form not fashioned out of matter, he passes out of himself and enters into an immortal body. He who would be born again must cleanse himself from the irrational torments of matter. Then the Powers of God, Truth, Good, Life, and Light, come and build up the body of Reason. And at last Tat exclaims, 'Father, God has made me a new being, and I perceive things now, not with bodily eyesight, but by the working of Mind. . . . I see myself to be the All. . . . I am present everywhere,' and he breaks into a hymn of praise, thankfulness, and peace, 'I have seen that which I seek; I have found rest according to thy purpose; by thy will I am born again.'[2]

To the disciple of Christ the experience of rebirth was much more than a psychological change awakened in a glow of metaphysical sentiment. It was founded on the belief in a mysterious union with his Lord in which symbol and fact were indistinguishably blended. The modern reader of the letters of the Apostle Paul is partly bewildered by the vehemence of his language, the variety

[1] See the text in Parthey's or in Prof. W. Scott's *Hermetica*, vol. i. lib. iv.

[2] So Prof. Scott. Cp. *ante*, p. 311. The reader may be warned that his text differs widely from Reizenstein's.

of his figures, and above all by the wide gap between his ideal presentations of the Christian life and his frank recognition of the actual moral condition of many of his converts. When he declares that if any man is in Christ he is a 'new creation,' the exalted claim is in strange contrast with the lists of sins which impair the health of the 'body of Christ.' But it is difficult not to believe that the rite of baptism was thought to involve something much more fundamental than an ordinary lustration of the Eleusinian type or even the forgiveness of sins preached on the Jordan bank by John. The membership in the Church into which the hearer was admitted brought with it tremendous privileges but also grave responsibilities. Their baptism, Paul told the Corinthians, made them drink of one spirit (1 Cor. xii. 13). In the mystical identification of the Spirit with the Lord (2 Cor. iii. 17) this is another way of saying, as he wrote to the Galatians (iii. 27), that they had clothed themselves with Christ. Paul does not use the figure of birth except to assert for himself the parentage of the Corinthian Christians as their begetter through the Gospel (1 Cor. iv. 15). But his impassioned view of the sequel of baptism surely implied that it brought a new spiritual energy into the inmost recesses of their being. 'You were washed, you were sanctified, you were made righteous in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God' (1 Cor. vi. 11). These are all parts of one process. Consecration to the new life, forgiveness of sins rendering them ideally righteous, and entitling them to acquittal in the judgment, are the results of the act.[1] But that is not all. In union with Christ the believer must needs repeat in himself in a different mode the solemn events of the cross and the tomb. He must actually share the experience of his Lord and conform to the type of death and resurrection. As he plunged into the water the old man within him died and was buried. He emerged to 'walk in newness

[1] This is not affected by possible variations in the translations of the first verb, 'washed yourselves,' or 'washed away [your sins].' The only other occurrence is in Acts xxii. 16, 'Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins.' Yet in 1 Cor. i. 14-17 he was by no means concerned himself to baptize.

of life.' He had been crucified with Christ, and the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead entered his mortal body with like quickening power (Rom. vi. 3-9; viii. 11). Those who had died through their trespasses thus experienced in baptism the 'working of God,' and were endowed with a life which they would hereafter share with Christ. They were even already raised with him, and their life was 'hid with Christ in God' (Col. ii. 13; iii. 1, 3), or as the letter to the Ephesians expresses it, they were 'made to sit in the heavenlies with him' (ii. 6). That was the ideal view. The danger was that the 'old man' had not, after all, effectually died. The doings of the body still needed to be put to death; the members on earth, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, had to be slain afresh.[1]

The metaphors of the Apostle did not hold their ground, and probably under the influence of contemporary language and practice the conception of regeneration or re-birth established itself in their place.[2] According to the current text the Evangelist recognised the Church partnership of both water and Spirit in bringing it about. Its superiority to the baptism of John is implied in the prophet's modest estimate of himself as only the bridegroom's friend, full of joy in the speech of one who comes from above, and ready to decrease that he may increase.[3] The statement that Jesus baptized (iii. 22) is afterwards withdrawn (iv. 2); but in the correction the Evangelist holds out a signal for the spiritual interpretation in the scene that follows at Jacob's well. When Jesus reveals to the Samaritan woman his possession of 'living water' which shall spring up unto eternal life, her petition 'Give me this water' (iv. 15), like that of the Jews at Capernaum

[1] Rom. viii. 13; Col. iii. 5. Our English 'mortify' has so attenuated its meaning that we do not realise the implications of the two different Greek verbs, 'put to death,' 'make a corpse.' On the whole subject compare Pfleiderer, *Primitive Christianity*, vol. i. chap. xvii., and especially p. 387 ff.; W. Morgan, *Religion and Theology of Paul* (1917), pp. 206-212; E. F. Scott, *The Fourth Gospel*, pp. 129, 278 ff.

[2] Cp. Tit. iii. 5; 1 Pet. i. 3, 23; ii. 1-2; Barnabas vi. 11.

[3] iii. 29 ff. For the emphasis on the fulfilment of joy, cp. xv. 11; xvi. 24; xvii. 13.

for the life-giving bread (vi. 34), conveys an implied request for some sacramental grace, and its offer to one outside the pale of Israel prefigures the extension of the Gospel beyond all bounds of race. It is probably in the Evangelist's manner, again, that the cleansing efficacy of the rite should be indicated in the language of Jesus to Peter when he washed his disciples' feet (xiii. 10). And just as the Eucharistic promise is to be understood spiritually, 'the words that I have spoken to you, they are spirit and are life' (vi. 63), so at the supper table Jesus can tell his followers, 'Ye are clean because of the word which I have spoken unto you' (xv. 3).[1] In 1 John iii. 9 the conception of regeneration appears in its most pronounced form, 'Whosoever is begotten of God doeth no sin.' They, too, are conformed to the type of the Anointed, not in Pauline fashion by the death of the old man and the resurrection of the new, but by 'an anointing from the Holy One' so that they know all things (ii. 20).[2]

As Baptism brought new knowledge with it, Justin could describe it by the mystery term 'illumination.' In his account of the process by which believers were 'made new in Christ' (1 *Apol.* lxi.) he quotes the accepted teaching of the Church in the form 'Except ye be born again ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.' The actual derivation of the words from the Gospel, even with allowance for slight changes of memory, is uncertain. They might have been heard in Church teaching without being a conscious quotation. But the ecclesiastical practice plainly accords with the Johannine conception.[3]

[1] There are thus two levels of interpretation of the established rite. The Evangelist had to recognise the common custom, as in the case of the Eucharist (see below); but he seeks to carry it up above the material connexion. Two modes of religious experience really clash, as in the treatment of the eschatologic hope (p. 440).

[2] Or perhaps better (with the Sinaitic and Vatican MSS.), in reply to the Gnostic heretics with their grades of spirituality, 'so that ye all know'; within the Fellowship there are no distinctions.

[3] In the sequel Justin describes the Christians as *theoi*, identifying them with the 'gods and children of the Most High' (Ps. lxxxii. 6, *Dial.* cxxiv.). Those who had been raised with Christ had become immortal. This language passed into common Church usage, cp. J. E. C., *Phases*, p. 56 ff., and implied the endowment of believers with

What, it may be asked, finally, was the relation of baptism to that austere declaration 'No man can come to me except the Father who hath sent me draw him' (vi. 44)? Only those come who have heard from the Father and have learned. Is not a message from heaven truly apprehended and obeyed, sufficient for salvation? Before men could believe, argued the Apostle Paul, they must first have heard the word, and how could they hear it without a preacher (Rom. x. 14)? He left baptism, therefore, to others; Christ had not sent him to baptize but to preach the Gospel; he could say that in obedience to that charge he had 'fulfilled' it all the way from Jerusalem to Illyricum, and looked forward to going on into Spain (1 Cor. i. 17; Rom. xv. 19, 28). As Jesus prays on behalf of future converts (xvii. 20), the birth of faith in the willing listener prompting him to seek admission as a believer would itself be the witness that he was 'drawn' by the Father; and the whole outward chain of events in the expansion of the Christian missions would be the visible sign that Christ was drawing all men to himself (xii. 32).

III

The second of the two Christian rites, named by the Apostle Paul 'the Lord's Supper,' and afterwards known as the Eucharist,[1] is not left unnoticed in the Fourth Gospel. It is of course well known that its institution is not narrated, nor is it connected with the last meal of Jesus and his disciples. That is marked by the Teacher's lowly service in washing their feet, and his urgent appeal for mutual love summed up in the 'new commandment.' But the Evangelist is not indifferent to this central act of the worship of the Church, and devotes an important discourse to its meaning (vi. 27-59). This is associated

a new element capable of eternal life. The term was also applied by the Hermetic teachers who presented the goal of *gnosis* as *theôthênai*, 'to be made god (or divine),' i. 26, xiii. 10.

[1] Already by the Evangelist's contemporary Ignatius, the *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, and Justin, who briefly describes the service, 1 *Apol.* lxvi.

with the feeding of the multitude on the Galilean lake, and leads to a defection among the followers of Jesus, which has, however, no immediate issue. The miracle is placed close to a passover (vi. 4), and it is doubtful whether this is to be understood as a serious item in the Gospel chronology or as little more than a hint to recall the memory of the supper when Christ was about to suffer as the paschal lamb. The whole story is a signal illustration of the freedom with which the Synoptic tradition is shaped to fresh purposes. Its analysis is, however, embarrassed by many difficulties; and our ignorance both of the sources from which the Evangelist derived his materials and of the process by which they were combined, together with uncertainty concerning their meaning, renders all attempts to distinguish and interpret them in a high degree conjectural.[1]

Attention is at once aroused by the opening statement, 'After these things Jesus went away to the other side of the sea of Galilee.' He has been left speaking to his opponents in Jerusalem after the cure of the cripple at the pool. They have been angered by his breach of the sabbath and have even sought to kill him on the charge that he made himself equal with God. The narrative apparently assumes that Jesus crossed with his disciples in a boat,[2] starting from the western shore. But of his journey thither nothing is said. Between v. 47 and vi. 1 is a gap imperfectly bridged by the formula 'after these things' employed elsewhere to effect a frail connection between successive incidents (iii. 22; v. 1; vii. 1). The scenes in vi. form a continuous series, but its place in the Gospel is doubtful, as the sequel to v. 47 has been found by many students in vii. 15-24. Either some serious dislocation has accidentally confused the order,[3] or the

[1] The English reader may refer to Stanton, *The Gospels as Historical Documents*, vol. iii. p. 67 f., and Garvie, *The Beloved Disciple*, pp. 41-53. Cp. Dr. John Naish, *Expositor*, 8th Ser. 1922, vol. xxiii, 'The Fourth Gospel and the Sacraments.'

[2] This is implied in 17; the 'multitude' apparently assemble by land, as there are no boats waiting for them in which to return (22); cp. Mark vi. 32, 33.

[3] It has been suggested that vi. should follow iv. 54, but Jesus is then at Cana away on the Galilean hills.

story and the teaching now linked with it was a separate episode founded on Synoptic reminiscences of the ministry of Jesus around the lake, and inserted by the Evangelist without regard to the abruptness of the transition from Jerusalem.[1] Every attempt to find a suitable attachment appears to fail.[2]

The central conception of the discourse is the presentation of Jesus as the 'bread of God' (or 'of life'), the 'spiritual food' of all believers (1 Cor. x. 3). Of this mystery an impressive symbol is found in the feeding of the multitude. No less than five accounts of this event are found in the First Three Gospels. The tale was no doubt a popular one and had served as the theme of many a sermon. The Lukan version does not seem to contribute any precise touches; with each of the others some links may be traced probably due to reminiscence of Church teaching rather than to express literary dependence. The story is apparently conceived from a base at Capernaum (vi. 24). Jesus is followed to the other side (presumably on land, cp. Mark vi. 34; Matt. xiv. 13-14) by a great multitude, who have seen the cures wrought on the sick. Of these nothing has been said, and they must be taken for granted[3]; or were they related in some missing passage ascribing to Jesus a ministry at Capernaum? Matthew and Luke report the healing of sufferers among the crowd when they reached Jesus.[4] Contrary to the earlier versions of the story, but in accordance with Matt. xv. 29, Jesus went up into the mountain and sat there with his disciples. It was an act of solemnity (as in Matt. v. 1), not for the announcement of legislation for the Kingdom, but for the inauguration of a symbolic rite. The disciples are presumably the Twelve as in the Synoptic tradition (cp. 16, 71); Philip and Andrew have

[1] This is the more curious after the careful articulation of iv. 34.

[2] The identification of the lake of Galilee by the name of Tiberias (which alone is used in xxi. 1) may be due to a later gloss, cp. *ante*, p. 220.

[3] This is the only allusion in the Gospel to the healing activity of Jesus in Synoptic style.

[4] The 'multitude' is afterwards replaced by 'the Jews' (41, 52). The contrasted cases in the controversial scenes in vii. and viii. deserve notice.

been already named (i. 43, 40). Lifting up his eyes—another detail heightening the significance of the occasion (xi. 41 ; xvii. 1) [1]—he sees the crowd approaching, and without waiting for their arrival at once asks how they are to be fed. They represent believers thronging into the Church. The Synoptic story suffers a double inversion. The need does not arise at the end of a long day of attention to the Teacher, nor is it first recognised by the disciples ; it is anticipated in advance by Jesus, who questions Philip about the purchase of supplies. The suggested 200 pennyworth of bread is derived from Mark vi. 37.[2] Like Mark the Evangelist notes the grass, and also like his predecessor he reckons the multitude at 5000 men without Matthew's domestic addition of women and children. Matthew and Luke, following Mark, reproduce the Jewish 'blessing' or grace with which Jesus opens the meal. But in the secondary version its Eucharistic character is already hinted by the change of verb (Mark viii. 6 ; Matt. xv. 36) which John adopts (11). - The disciples are not employed to distribute the food. It is received by the seated ranks from the hand of Jesus himself, the host at the unexpected meal. In view of the subsequent discourse the change is significant. Jesus is symbolically communicating himself. The surplus of bread, identical with the Synoptic figure (the remains of the fishes, Mark vi. 43, being ignored), completes the miracle, and awakens the wondering comment, 'This is of a truth the prophet that cometh into the world' (cp. i. 27 and the parallel phrase in xi. 27). The recognition so suddenly changes into an intention to force Jesus to accept the title king, which he evades by withdrawal higher up the mountain, as to suggest the possible incorporation of an incident from another story.[3]

Evening arrives ; the disciples go down to the shore and enter 'a boat.' The absence of the article (contrast

[1] Only once in Synoptic narrative, Luke vi. 20, before the Sermon 'on a level place.'

[2] With the barley loaves (9) cp. the Elisha incident, 2 Kings iv. 42-44.

[3] The sequence of the verbs 'perceiving . . . withdrew' accidentally agrees with Matt. xii. 15.

Mark vi. 32, 45) leaves it uncertain whether they had themselves crossed in it from Capernaum or its neighbourhood; the multitude still on the mountain spend the night on that side of the lake. Darkness fell, and when the rowers were halfway across the lake, wrestling with a sudden storm, Jesus had not yet joined them (17). Did they, then, expect him to do so: had he made any such promise? As the boat tosses on the waves under the violence of a great wind, does the Evangelist portray the distresses of the Church waiting for the return of the Lord with deliverance and peace? So some have read the tale. Suddenly they see him approaching, walking on the waters. At his voice their fears subside.[1] They 'were minded' (i. 43) to receive him into the boat. It was not necessary. No sooner was the purpose formed than they found themselves with him at the land. The transcendence of Jesus over all physical conditions could not be more forcibly displayed.

The next morning the multitude are still on the eastern shore. The narrative which oddly relates that they only then saw that the disciples went away without Jesus the evening before,[2] unexpectedly provides little boats from Tiberias which opportunely arrive near the place of the Thanksgiving meal.[3] Embarking, they cross to Capernaum to look for Jesus. There is no more talk of prophet or king; they ask curiously 'Rabbi, when camest thou hither?' The reply of Jesus takes no notice of their

[1] The episode of Peter's attempt to join Jesus is ignored. For a remarkable Buddhist parallel cp. J. E. C., *Buddhism and Christianity*, p. 180, and *The First Three Gospels*,[4] p. 182.

[2] The difficulty is partly relieved if the Greek aorists may be translated (with the Latin version) as pluperfects.

[3] The use of the title 'the Lord' (23) perhaps indicates an addition. Very frequent in address as 'Sir' or equivalent to 'Teacher' (xiii. 13), it only occurs in passages of apparently secondary character till after the resurrection (cp. iv. 1; xi. 2). The commentators who suggest that the boats had accidentally drifted across the lake in the high wind and came to land at the appropriate spot, forget that transport had to be provided for 5000 men. The narrative implies that the multitude had gathered on foot. The vagueness about local detail, which may be due to inadequate geographical realisation, heightens the supernatural atmosphere enveloping the whole story.

enquiry, but at once charges them with a greedy appetite incapable of understanding the meaning of the signs which they had witnessed,[1] and then unexpectedly commences a discourse on the proper object of 'work.' As they had enjoyed a meal the day before without any toil of their own, the warning against labour for material ends seems without ground; and the abrupt introduction suggests that what follows was originally an independent exposition of the solemn mystery of the 'bread of God' and its descent from heaven, to which the story of the wondrous meal was prefixed as a practical illustration of the earthly manifestation of the Divine Son.

The distinction between the meat which perisheth and that which abides unto eternal life belongs to the main conception of the Gospel already announced to Nicodemus, the contrast between 'earthly' and 'heavenly' things. The disciples had already learned that Jesus himself had food of which they knew nothing (iv. 32). He was himself sustained by accomplishing the work given him to do (iv. 34; xvii. 4), for which purpose the Father had enabled him to have life in himself (v. 26), and had thus 'sealed' or accredited him in sending him into the world. And as the new birth through the Spirit depended on the return of the Son of Man to his eternal home, the heavenly food would be in the same way his future gift when he had re-entered the world above (vi. 62; iii. 13). The mention of the Son of Man, it may be noted, creates no such perplexity as in the later scene in Jerusalem, xii. 34. When the multitude enquire what are the requisite 'works of God'—commandments which they may fulfil—their whole duty is summed up comprehensively in one word, faith.[2] The personal demand evokes a counter claim for some justification of it by a 'sign,' such as had been given by Moses in the provision of manna during Israel's wanderings in the wilderness. The Phari-

[1] Besides the wondrous meal the means of transit may perhaps be included.

[2] Cp. Rev. ii. 26; John xii. 44; xiv. 12. On the verb 'believe' cp. below, p. 446. Heitmüller and Loisy see here a reference to early Christian controversy on Pauline teaching. Each fresh student naturally has his own view of what interpretations are 'forced.'

sees had made a similar request (Mark viii. 31), but they had not witnessed the miracle. Its inappropriateness here is so plain that it is hard to regard the sequence of 27 ff. on the wondrous feast as really original. Jesus does not as in the Synoptic tradition refuse the appeal in deep dejection, nor does he recall what he has already done; he simply asserts that the bread which came through Moses was not the 'real' bread; that is God's gift, no temporary substitute for Israel's needs, but a perpetual supply for the whole world's life.[1] The announcement immediately draws out a petition for the gift of this bread like that of the Samaritan woman for the 'living water' (iv. 15), with the prayer that it may be made constant, 'Evermore give us this bread.' The answer of Jesus is the first of the solemn declarations of his spiritual transcendence, 'I am the bread of life.' It is the equivalent of 'I am the truth.' For those who would hunger and thirst after righteousness[2] the Church had already learned that they should be filled. In the name of Wisdom the Son of Sirach had depicted the increasing demand which would arise from the enjoyment of her gifts, 'They that eat me shall yet be hungry, and they that drink me shall yet be thirsty' (*Ecclus.* xxiv. 21). Far otherwise will the believer find enduring satisfaction, 'He that cometh to me shall not hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.' The descent of the bread of God, the revelation of him as Spirit, Life, Love, Light, is no single event, it is a constant process, the mystic secret of the energy which will quicken the world.

But who are those in the crowd around him who can receive it? Jesus reproaches them for having seen, and

[1] Popular Jewish expectation had probably already begun to expect the Messiah to renew the heavenly food (cp. Strack-Billerbeck *in loc.*), and the episode indicated in 14 may have had some indirect relation in the editorial process to the discourse. Many critics in view of the Prologue make much of Philo's numerous references to manna as a symbol of the Logos; and it is quite possible that even without definite identification with the Prologue which may not have been then written (cp. Lect. IV., *ante*, p. 333), the mystical atmosphere may have employed such an analogy independently of Philo's particular religious speculations.

[2] Cp. Matt. v. 6 with Luke vi. 21.

still having no faith.[1] Alas, they might plead, they are not of those who were 'given' him by the Father. The prophet might cry 'Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters'; Wisdom might array her banquet and issue her invitation, 'Come, eat ye of my bread' (Isai. lv. 1; Prov. ix. 5); but to the Johannine mystic faith was the product of a 'pull' from above: 'No man can come unto me except the Father which sent me draw him' (44). Of those thus assigned he will lose nothing (39; cp. xvii. 12), but will raise them up at the last day, where the reiterated phrase (40, 44, 54) arouses the suspicion of adaptation (possibly by a later hand) to popular eschatology; it is incongruous with that faith which intrinsically *is* eternal life, so that its possessor has already passed out of death for his judgment is over (v. 24; cp. 1 John iii. 14, and below, p. 442). Carrying on the symbolism of the manna, Jesus affirms that he has come down from heaven, but his further words show that it is not to be eaten but to do the will of him that sent him. The objection of the Jews recalls the criticism at Nazareth (Mark vi. 3) in a heightened form;[2] it is the echo of contemporary controversy. It is met by repeated assertion, and an appeal to prophecy 'They shall all be taught of God' (Isai. liv. 13; Jer. xxxi. 33-34). That is not, however, to be understood in the sense in which the Gospel breaks down all national limitations. Such divine instruction is the privilege only of those who have been already 'drawn'; beyond that company there is no

[1] Some editors omit 'me,' and suppose the reference to be 'a sign' (30), the hearers in the present connexion having 'seen signs' (26). If the discourse was not originally linked with the story, but possibly belonged to a group of illustrative teachings, the pronoun seems quite suitable, though there is often a tendency in copyists to add words to make the supposed meaning a little clearer. It will be noted that the multitude has practically disappeared. 'The Jews' take their usual place as objectors (41, 52), and the locality is insensibly transferred from the western shore where Jesus was 'found' (25) to the synagogue at Capernaum (59). This seems to support the view that the original setting of the discourse was a Johannine counterpart to the synagogue scenes of the Synoptics.

[2] The word 'murmur' is specially Lukan, v. 30; xv. 2; xix. 7; but it may also suggest a reminiscence of the language of Exod. xvi. Cp. below, 43, 61; vii. 32.

comprehension of his speech (viii. 43, 47). Once more Jesus emphasises the contrast by which the superiority of the new dispensation is established over the old. 'Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness and died. This is the bread of life which comes down from heaven' —not for one generation only but as a constant provision —'that a man may eat thereof and not die.' In the realm of the Spirit bodily death does not count (cp. xi. 24-26).

At this point a new idea is brought into the discourse. By the designation 'living bread' a fresh turn is given to the identification of Jesus with the 'bread of life.' Its descent is thrown into the past, the act of condescension by which the Son left his supernal glory (the heavenly Christ is speaking). Whoever eats of it does not enter at once into the lofty apprehension of God known as 'eternal life,' he is assured of future salvation because he 'shall live for ever.' Slight as is the modification of phrase there is a perceptible change of tone, which is accentuated by the addition that the bread which Jesus will give is his flesh, for the life of the world. The strange words are met by a question like that of Nicodemus (iii. 4), 'How can this man give us his flesh to eat?' The Evangelist attempts no explanation. To the Jews of his day he can only repeat current conceptions with increasing emphasis. How the Church had altered the older term 'body' (which was susceptible of various interpretations) into the concrete 'flesh' we can no longer trace. The change had probably already taken place when the Gospel was written. Ignatius could lay it down that 'the Eucharist is the flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ' (*Smyrn.* vii. 1); and he supported his plea for 'one bishop with the presbytery and deacons' by a reference to 'one flesh of Jesus Christ, and one cup for union with his blood' (*Philad.* iv.). Emphasis on the flesh made the further demand that believers should drink the blood still more explicit. And the employment of a new word for eating three times over (56-58), unrecognised in English, can hardly leave any doubt that the Evangelist has a physical act in view.[1]

[1] Philologically identical with 'chew.' The commentators produce instances from later Greek writers in association with 'drink,' showing

When Ignatius identified the 'bread of God' with the 'flesh of Jesus Christ' (Rom. vii. 3), he carried from Antioch the same conception which was being elaborated by the Evangelist.[1] It seems somewhat incongruous that the possession of eternal life formerly linked to faith (47) should be made apparently dependent on the consumption of flesh and blood, even when they were those of the Son of Man. That spiritual results will follow is implied in the promise of mutual indwelling (56), elsewhere presented in the beautiful figure of the vine (xv. 5), where, however, Christ's presence in the believer is effected through his words (cp. 1 John ii. 24), just as 'abide in me' becomes 'abide in my word' (viii. 31). Much criticism of the Fourth Gospel is inevitably the result of personal impressions, and I cannot avoid the conviction that in 51-58 language on a very different plane compared with that in 32-50 has been here embodied. The verbal indications are, it is true, but slight; they point, however, to other modes of religious utterance, and these (it may be argued) are in the sequel practically disowned.[2]

that the coarseness of its early meaning was already modified. It is used again by the Evangelist (xiii. 18) in translating Psalm xli. 10, where the LXX. employs the common word.

[1] It was not necessarily derived by Ignatius from the Gospel. It is rather a sign of the geographical extension of the modes of thought out of which the Gospel emerged. The *Didachê*, ix. 3, in dwelling on the 'broken bread' evidently has the original 'body' behind it. Justin, after residence in Ephesus, naturally uses the term 'flesh.'

[2] Textual evidence still shows some early preference for 'body' over 'flesh'; *e.g.* in the Syr. Sin. (Merx *in loc.*), 51, 'the bread which I will give is my body which is for the life of the world'; 54, 'he that eateth his body'; 57, 'he that eateth my body.' Cp. Burkitt, *Evangelion ad Mepharreshê*, i. p. 459. To 56 D adds, 'As the Father *is* in me and I am in the Father. Verily, verily, I say unto you, if you do not receive the body of the Son of Man as the bread of life, you have no life in you' (cp. early Latin). In 57 for 'eateth me' D reads 'receiveth me.' On the other hand D drops 'and my blood is drink indeed' 55, and Blass omits the corresponding words in 56. In 51 'the living bread' is not quite the same as 'bread of life.' The promise in 51, 58, 'live for ever' occurs nowhere else, nor does the phrase 'have life in yourselves' (cp. v. 26). The adjective *alēthês* in 55 differs from *alēthinos*, 32; it is elsewhere applied only to persons or their testimony or things said. (In xix. 35 the two adjectives curiously occur side by side, where *alēthinos* is rather oddly employed.) On *alēthinos* cp. *ante*, p. 320. These differences in phraseology have so far passed unnoticed, and strengthen the view that 51-58 may be an explanatory

What is it, then, that lies behind this urgency for the actual consumption of Christ's flesh and blood? Strange ideas, it would seem, had early gathered round the ritual of commemoration first described by the Apostle Paul. There, after the common meal on what came to be known as 'the Lord's day,' a loaf was solemnly broken, and its pieces distributed, and a cup was filled from which each drank in turn. Words of thanksgiving or remembrance were uttered; the table on which the loaf and cup were placed was designated 'the Lord's table,' and the act was described as 'sharing' in the body and blood of Christ (1 Cor. x. 16-21).[1] The Apostle earnestly exhorts his Corinthian converts to realise the full force of such participation. The English language does not easily render his Greek. The altar-attendants 'share with the altar' (1 Cor. ix. 13). What is meant by this expression? The offering placed on the altar ceased to belong to the person who brought it, and became the property of God. God, says Philo, being beneficent and bountiful, makes the whole company of those offering the sacrifice 'sharers of the altar and table-mates.' In other words they became partners in the relation thus established with Deity by the sacrifice. A mysterious tie was created between them such that the grace which the sacrifice drew down from the exalted Host (as he had been of old regarded) flowed in upon them. The priests are described as 'sharers in the offering made to God in thanksgiving' (eucharist).[2] An inscription at Cos employs similar language about a hereditary priesthood of Herakles. The Christian 'table' had the same significance as the Gentile. The Egyptian

addition. Loisy reduces the discourse by marking 26-27, 32-33, 47-48, 51, 53-58 as interpolations, without, however, offering any reasons. Similarly Heitmüller suspects 28-30 (?), 38-40, 44-47, also without stating his grounds. The two lists show how difficult is the partition without some differences in actual contents and phraseology such as mark 51-58.

[1] Cp. Kennedy, *St. Paul and the Mystery Religions* (1913), p. 269; and the commentaries of Lietzmann and J. Weiss. The latter has laid special stress on the significance of the rite as a counterpart to the representative action in a mystery-cult.

[2] Philo, *De Special. Legibus*, i. 221 (ed. Cohn, v. p. 54); *ib.* 131 (p. 32); cp. Lietzmann, *in loc.*

Greek who issued invitations to dinner at the 'table of the Lord Serapis' in the Serapeum at three o'clock, brought his guests into 'communion' with the Deity through a common meal of dedication.[1] To Paul Serapis, like other objects of popular worship, was only a Daemon. The Corinthians whose city was full of statues of such Daemons made attractive by art, were emphatically warned against participation in fellowship with them. 'You cannot drink the Lord's cup and the Daemon's cup; you cannot partake of the Lord's table and the Daemon's table.' There were daemons of very different ranks. Common belief doubtless regarded the world as infested with noxious spirits. The Christian saw them in the temple, the theatre, the home. They flitted around the sacrifices and the blood. They occupied the statues, lurked in shady springs, in cisterns and baths. They even passed with food into the person. Philosophy recognised them no less than popular imagination.[2] Were such ideas present in the higher cults? Did the worshipper of Mithra attribute to his meal the power to bring his Deity into his own body? Was that the meaning of 'sharing in the offerings to Herakles'? When the guests sat round the table of Serapis did they suppose that they were 'eating him'?

The Apostle's language is not free from ambiguity, and it is enveloped in passionate convictions of the action of Christ which are hardly intelligible at the present day. The fathers of Israel had been all maintained in the wilderness by the same 'spiritual' or supernatural food; similarly, they had all drunk the same spiritual drink. Here was the providential anticipation of the elements of the supper, for was not the wondrous rock which accompanied them in their wanderings no other than Christ?[3] He was the food and drink which had nourished them during their long training for the occupation of

[1] *Pap. Oxyrh.* i. 110; the 'table' might be in the house, *ib.* iii. 523. For arrangements in the temple of Isis at Pompeii, cp. J. E. C., *Phases*, p. 259.

[2] Cp. J. E. C., *Phases*, p. 24.

[3] 1 Cor. x. 1-4. Wetstein has collected a number of Rabbinical passages illustrating this singular legend. For modern references cp. Robertson and Plummer (I.C.C.) *in loc.*

Canaan. Now, crucified and risen, he was going to be food and drink to believers till his glorious return. Had they not been buried with him by baptism unto death, and had they not been raised so that their life was hid with him in God? The rite of the Lord's table was the Christian equivalent of a mystery. It was reserved for the baptized only; and it was invested with the solemn emotions characteristic of the endeavours to apprehend Divine Reality which the contemporary combinations of Greek and Oriental faiths had already introduced. These were of course of every grade, some coarse, and some more refined. Their essence consisted in symbolic acts designed to secure for the worshipper some supernatural gift of higher life. The Eleusinian rites, for instance, had been for centuries an accepted method of obtaining a better lot in the world after death. Inasmuch as the act was the condition of the bestowal of the grace, ideas of hidden connexions gathered in different ways and at various rates around the objects employed, the words recited, the deed performed, the powers brought into operation, and the agent of communication between the human and the Divine. So characteristic was this of the first century of our era that Harnack can describe the age as 'peculiarly afflicted with the sacramental mania.' That such influences had begun to affect Judaism has been frankly recognised. It is no less clear that when Christianity was carried into the Gentile world it soon found occasions for their exercise. 'Although Christian worship (writes Harnack) is to be a worship in spirit and in truth, these sacraments are sacred actions *which operate on life*, containing forgiveness of sins, knowledge, and eternal life. No doubt the elements of water, bread, and wine, are symbols, and the scene of operation is not external: still, the symbols do actually convey to the soul all that they signify. Each symbol has a mysterious and real connexion with the fact which it symbolises.' [1]

When the bread and wine were placed on the Lord's table, what happened to them? We know not who

[1] *The Mission and Expansion of Christianity* (1908), vol. i. p. 228; cp. *ibid.* p. 100.

presided, or what prayers were offered over them. But they were not left alone. The loaf was broken, and the cup was filled. Something mystic, wonderful, passed into them. They not only awoke reverent remembrance of the Lord's last meal and all the incidents of the fatal night, the anguish, the treachery, the desertion, the trial, the scourge, the cross, they symbolised his death—and all the blessings of redemption secured by it—till he should return. The act was thus charged with intense significance. Christ's body was again symbolically broken, and as each saint received a fragment within his lips he felt himself with fresh intensity an actual 'limb' of his Lord. Sharing with others in the same food as fellow 'members,' he realised that as there had been one loaf, so they themselves constituted one 'body.' Something of Christ dwelt in each one. In the form of spirit (2 Cor. iii. 17) it gave them words of wisdom and knowledge, faith, gifts of healing, and the like. Under the material of the loaf it knit them into a common brotherhood where each in his degree could say with Paul that Christ lived in him.

Was Christ, then, so present in the loaf that those who shared the bread ate him? There were not wanting illustrations in Greek ritual of such assimilation of Deity by physical means. In different forms of the worship of Dionysus a sacrificial bull representing the god himself was torn in pieces and consumed in haste. The devotees who took part in this Omophagy ('raw-eating') received the deity into themselves. The believer became *entheos* ('having the god within him'), and was nourished with a mysterious supernatural power. Happy is he, says Euripides, 'who knoweth the mysteries of gods, is pure in life, and revelling on the mountains hath the Bacchic communion in his soul.' Dancing furiously over the mountain slopes to the wild strains of savage music, he fell on the bull, tore it asunder, and swallowed the bleeding flesh. It was a ghastly form of purification. In the allied Orphic communities it produced 'a doctrine irrational and unintelligible, and for that very reason wrapped in the deepest and most sacred mystery; a belief in the sacrifice of Dionysus himself, and the purification of man by his

blood.' [1] It may be doubted how far such rites were still practised under the Empire. The witty satirist, Lucian, however, writing in the second century, describes the popular interest in the cities of Ionia when the season for the 'Dionysiac dances' came round. There were Titans and Corybantes, Satyrs and Cowherds. Men of the most distinguished birth and position took part in the pageants,[2] and inscriptional notices of the mystery-associations of the 'Cowherds' may be traced for centuries.[3] It is possible that the ancient omophagy was still represented in pantomime; but what had once embodied a genuine religious aspiration survived only as a parody in a public show.

The Apostle Paul does not so specifically identify the 'cup' with the 'blood' of Christ as he does the 'loaf' with the 'body.' Both are indeed so intimately connected with Christ that to eat or drink 'unworthily'—by greediness or intoxication or any irreverence (21)—is to sin against the hallowed objects which like the manna and the rock of old were in some sense 'Christ.' Such conduct drew down judgment on the offender, and Paul does not hesitate to attribute recent sickness and death at Corinth to that cause, whether induced through the wonderful powers inherent in the loaf and cup themselves, or directly inflicted from above by Christ or God, he leaves undetermined. What is significant throughout is that the rite has a corporate origin, character, and effect. It binds those who partake of the 'body' in the loaf into the mystical 'body' of the Church.

This line of thought was developed without reference to the 'body' in the Eucharistic prayer of the *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* with more concrete imagery: 'As this broken piece once scattered upon the mountains was brought together and became one, so let thy Church be

[1] Prof. Gilbert Murray in *Euripides* ('Athenian Drama,' iii.), pp. 167-8. For the above, a little more fully, see J. E. C. *Phases*, pp. 273-4.

[2] Lucan, *De Saltationibus*, 79.

[3] Cp. Anrich, *Das Antike Mysterienwesen* (1894), p. 41 f.; and on the whole subject, Angus, *Mystery Religions and Christianity* (1925), pp. 127-133.

gathered together from the ends of the earth into the kingdom.' A second prayer gave thanks that as God had created food and drink for men's enjoyment, 'On us hast thou bestowed spiritual food and drink and eternal life through thy servant' (or child, as in Acts iii. 13, 26). The little manual of conduct and devotion is not in the line of Pauline ideas; but Ignatius of Antioch who wrote to the Ephesians as 'fellow-initiates with Paul' might have been expected to show some acquaintance with his conceptions. For him (as for the authors of the 'Teaching') the Lord's Supper has become the Eucharist. Without any reference to the symbolic commemoration of Christ's death it is the principle of union for the Church, 'Because there is one flesh of the Lord Jesus Christ, and one cup for union with his blood' (*Philad.* iv.). Such wondrous energy does it possess that it can be designated 'the medicine of immortality,' 'the antidote that we should not die but live for ever in Jesus Christ' (*Ephes.* xx. 2).[1] The heretics who held aloof from the Eucharist refused to acknowledge that it was the Saviour's flesh 'which suffered for our sins, which the Father raised up in his goodness.' Here is a possible clue to the change in Eucharistic terminology. 'Body' became 'flesh' because the Church was endangered by the denial that Jesus had 'come in the flesh.'[2] Some kind of form he necessarily possessed when he moved upon earth as a man among men. But a 'body,' though human in appearance, might be unsubstantial and thus exempt from suffering; and if Jesus had not really died upon the cross he had not really risen, and the victory over death with its precious issue of grace, forgiveness, and everlasting life, was never won. The glowing language of Ignatius does not emphasize the Pauline idea of the believer's membership in the Church as Christ's 'body,' and from the Johannine reference to the sacrament the corporate element has totally disappeared. The reason is plain. Detached from all connexion with a meal more than a year distant, it

[1] Cp. John vi. 51. The adverb is different, but the meaning is the same.

[2] *Smyrn.* vii. 1; cp. 1 John iv. 1-3.

has no permanent reference to any particular persons, still less to any succeeding institutions. In the Capernaum synagogue Jesus could not explain how he would give his flesh 'for the life of the world,' and in seeking his authority for contemporary usage and belief the Evangelist could only frame the promise in individualistic terms. That his language should bewilder his Jewish critics by its resolute realism is not surprising.

Even a summons to eat of the 'bread of life' which comes down from heaven was a sufficiently hard saying, especially when Jesus identified it with himself. Modern Christianity has so completely accepted it as a beautiful symbol of the soul's food that it does not realise that if the petition 'Lord, evermore give us this bread,' was to be fulfilled by 'eating' him, in the sacramental language of the Church—devouring his flesh and drinking his blood—the saying was much harder.[1] 'Does this make you to stumble?' asks Jesus. 'If then you should behold the Son of Man ascending where he was before——?' What is the completion of this arrested enquiry? When Jesus has returned to the glory which he had with the Father before the world was, how could his flesh be eaten? It is only the Spirit that 'makes alive'; 'the flesh profits nothing.' If so, then, why should it be eaten? Just as that which is born of the flesh is flesh (iii. 8), so, it might be said, that which is eaten of the flesh only becomes flesh. Eternal life—or even life that will last for ever—cannot be generated out of anything material. It is imparted by the words which are the vehicle of Spirit, which convey ideas, and, still more, communicate the wondrous impact of a loftier personality, an energy 'from above' giving life to what was 'beneath.' Let them learn the distinction between 'earthly' and 'heavenly' things, and they would understand how it was food to do the Father's will and to finish his work (iv. 34).[2]

[1] The Jews whom the Evangelist had in view held the idea of drinking blood in especial abhorrence, and this language must have contributed to widen the gulf in the second century between the Synagogue and the Church.

[2] Cp. Philo's discussion of what nourishes the soul (*On Fugitives*, i. 137, Cohn-Wendland, iii. p. 139); in Exod. xvi. the manna-story, it

The explanation fails to convince those to whom the Father had not given the power to come to Jesus. As they cease to follow him he is not surprised, he knew beforehand who would believe. Yet he enquires of the Twelve as though he needed assurance from them, 'Would ye also go away?' The question draws from Peter the response which ages have repeated after him in faith and love, 'Lord, to whom shall we go, thou hast the words of eternal life.' [1]

IV

The divine purpose of salvation in Jesus is described (as we have seen) from different points of view in phrases

was found to be the word (*rhēma*) of God and divine Reason (*logos*). The long exposition of the soul's food (*Allegories of the Sacred Laws*, iii. 161-174; *ibid.* i. pp. 148-151) contains repeated reference to this 'word,' concluding with Deut. viii. 3, 'Man shall not live by bread alone,' etc. The 'words' (or 'sayings,' *rhēmata*) of Jesus have high significance, first because they are 'words' of God (iii. 34), then as the representatives of the divine activity working through his own personality, cp. xii. 47, 48; xiv. 10; xv. 7; xvii. 8. In view of the possibility that 51-58 is a later addition after the first arrangement of the Gospel, the reply of Jesus will be a protest against a literal interpretation of the invitation to feed on the 'bread of life'; the 'flesh' is the 'somatic' meaning in contrast to the 'spiritual' (*ante*, p. 242). Cp. the use made of the Johannine discourse on this basis by Clement of Alexandria, J. E. C. *Phases*, p. 337. Justin, on the other hand, appears to use the term 'flesh' of its material substance, but the Eucharist is not received as 'common' bread or drink. The passage is obscure, but the change effected in the elements is compared to the incarnation by which 'Jesus Christ was made flesh by the word of God,' 1 *Apol.* lxvi. Does this mean that the Logos in some way united himself with the elements so that they corresponded to what in the human person were flesh and blood? On xix. 34, 35, cp. below, p. 461[1].

[1] Peter's declaration (69) that Jesus is God's 'Holy One' is the Johannine equivalent of the Synoptic declaration, 'Thou art the Messiah' (Mark viii. 29), though the language and the setting are different. (The Authorised Version, following the Textus Receptus, actually reads, 'Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.') The term is applied in that sense in Acts iii. 14, and probably in Mark i. 24. In an interesting article in the *Expositor*, 8th ser., vol. xxii., 1922, on 'The Fourth Gospel and the Sacraments,' Dr. John Naish suggests (p. 66) that as the term *hagios* was used for initiates in the mystery-cults, 'Here our Lord seems to be presented as the supreme and representative initiate.' If it has not the Messianic meaning (cp. 1 John ii. 20), it would seem more natural to connect it with his 'sanctification' or consecration of himself (xvii. 19), that his apostles may be similarly 'sanctified in truth.' On the relations of belief and knowledge see below, p. 447 ff.

elastic enough to admit of divers interpretations. To cleanse the past its object was to take away the world's sin. To secure the future he came that men might have life, and might have it abundantly (x. 10); and the Evangelist sought to carry on the great enterprise by showing how after his departure life might be gained in his name by faith (xx. 31). The grounds of this faith have been already examined. They lie primarily in the testimony borne to the person of Jesus as the Messiah and the Son of God in the record of his works and words. They lie further in the appeal to the experience of believers, bound together by common rites and united in self-sacrificing love. Life in the Fellowship was raised above the world to the level on which Jesus had stood. The disciple must purify himself even as he was pure (1 John iii. 3). The young man must, like him, conquer the Evil One (*ibid.* ii. 13, 14). With him they must be ready to lay down their lives for the brethren (*ibid.* iii. 16). They have been born again out of God, and so have acquired the divine gift of 'life in themselves'; they have passed out of death into a new kind of being (*ibid.* iii. 14). What, then, is the promise of the future? When the world has passed away (*ibid.* ii. 17), where will they find a home?

Ephesian prophecy had already provided an answer to such questions. To the victors in the great warfare special rewards would be allotted—fruit from the tree of life in the garden of God's paradise—a crown of life—food from the hidden manna and a new name—white garments and Christ's confession of the hero's name before the Father and his angels—the function of a pillar in God's temple inscribed with divine names—a place beside the Messiah on his throne.[1] One phrase, never used in the Apocalypse, sums up for the Evangelist all possibilities of love and joy, 'eternal life.' It was, of course, no new designation of the disciples' future. It was the familiar description of his inheritance in the kingdom of God,[2] and imagination invested it with brilliant hues of scenic splendour. The traditions of the primitive Church, framed in the midst

[1] Cp. on the Revelation, Lect. II, p. 87.

[2] Cp. Luke xviii. 30, 'in the æon (age) to come æonian life.'

of these confident expectations, attributed to Jesus elaborate pictures of his own return from the skies, following on social disorders, religious decline, and convulsions of nature, to inaugurate the Rule of Heaven before the last of his followers had passed away. With such hopes, it would seem, the Fourth Evangelist had little sympathy. For 'heavenly things' of this type he had no real place in his order of ideas. Yet they formed a most attractive element in contemporary teaching as the subsequent expositions of Justin Martyr and Irenæus amply prove. They could not be wholly ignored, any more than the material interpretations placed on the sacraments. But if they could not be completely eliminated, they might be cast into other forms of thought, and adapted to a very different scheme of spiritual realities. It was a bold enterprise, and was not perhaps at first wholly acceptable to all the community in which it was conceived.

To the announcements of the coming of the Son of Man at Caesarea Philippi (Mark viii. 38; ix. 1), upon the Mount of Olives (Mark xiii. 26, 30-31), and to the high-priest at the trial (Mark xiv. 62), the Fourth Evangelist records no parallel. But in the intimate discourses at the last meal the promise of reunion follows the tenderness of farewell. 'I will not leave you orphans, I will come to you' (xiv. 18).[1] What will be the form of this advent? Is it realised in the evening gatherings of the disciples, on the first day of the week, when Jesus 'comes' through closed doors and stands in their midst (xx. 19, 26)? In the allusive style of the Evangelist (cp. xiv. 28; xvi. 16, 22) this meaning may be intended. But these are, after all, only preparatory symbols of other advents. The author of the Appendix expresses the hope of the Church

[1] On indications of the combination of different materials in xiv.-xvii. cp. Lect. V, p. 391. Harnack, in the *Sitzungsberichte* of the Prussian Academy of Sciences, 1915, p. 551, peremptorily dismisses the supper-discourses as 'a *Sammelbecken* of various elements with arbitrary connexion or none at all.'—Phaedo, the 'beloved disciple' (Jowett), related that when Socrates before drinking the hemlock had gone to bathe, 'we remained behind, talking and thinking of the subject of discourse, and also of the greatness of our sorrow; he was like a father of whom we were being bereaved, and we were about to pass the rest of our lives as orphans' (116 A). Cp. W. Bauer.

for another arrival (xxi. 21). To this the Elder gives the recognised name *parousia* (1 John ii. 28),[1] and this seems to gleam through the Teacher's words, 'If I go and prepare a place for you, I come again and will receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also' (xiv. 3).[2] This is a Johannine parallel to the Pauline expectation of the personal reunion of believers with the Lord on his descent from heaven, so that they might be ever with him (1 Thess. iv. 17). It implies a variety of abodes in the Father's house, adapted (as Irenæus afterwards taught) to different grades of the saved.[3] The reward of service might imply continuance of local association; 'Where I am, there shall my servant be.' But the cosmic geography of contemporary imagination was not suited to the conception of God as Spirit, and for those who were no longer servants but friends (xv. 15) a more intimate fellowship was reserved; 'If a man love me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him' (xiv. 23). The gift of the Spirit has been announced just before, another Helper to abide with the community 'for ever.' No more profound contrast can be imagined with the ideas of sacramental communion expounded in the synagogue at Capernaum. A union founded on obedience and love is quite independent of the physical consumption of flesh and blood. But it may be asked whether three separate advents are capable of distinct recognition. Do Father and Son sometimes arrive together, and how can they be apprehended as two? In those high moments of communion with the eternal, when (to adapt Wordsworth's phrase) 'thought is not, in enjoyment it expires,' can the disciple say to himself, 'Now is the Father with me,' or 'this time Christ has vouchsafed to come,' or once more, 'the Son has departed, and the Spirit has arrived?' No, these are but the efforts of language to present to the

[1] Cp. Matt. xxiv. 3; 1 Cor. xv. 23, etc.

[2] The figure of the woman in travail (xvi. 21) may even be an obscure transformation of the well-known 'birth-pains' of the Messiah; cp. Mark xiii. 8.

[3] Against Heresies, V. xxxvi., conclusion.

imagination facts which do not lie in the realm of space and time. The mysteries of the manifestations of God to the soul cannot be reduced to fixed forms; in diverse orders of experience they are apprehended in different modes.[1] To make them the foundation of ecclesiastical dogmas is to pervert their character, to mistake their individuality, and destroy their value. The Evangelist speaks in the name of a company of believers united by a common sense of participation in the world of spirit. He sees its members lifted into a new life in which old sins have been conquered and brotherly love has filled all hearts. So mighty is the change that it can only be expressed in the figure of another birth, birth of the soul out of a higher realm of being, birth out of God. In this inner sphere all kinds of new relations are disclosed, to Christ who has been the 'Way' of entry into this unseen world, to God who is the begetter of the wondrous energy which enables them to vanquish evil, and fills them with an ineffable sense of harmony and peace. 'Neither pray I for these alone,' says Jesus, in his last words of prayer for the disciples, 'but for them also who believe on me through their word, that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us' (xvii. 20, 21).[2]

The visible 'coming' of Jesus in clouds of glory, promised so explicitly in the First Three Gospels as an external event, is thus transmuted into a spiritual communion. It is not an equivalent, still less is it an identical, experience. Under new conditions the old conception of the future is silently set aside, and a path is opened into the eternal. Yet faith has dwelt so ardently on its expectation of Christ's return to wind up the existing scene that some efforts of accommodation are natural. It may

[1] Cp. the '*Parousia*' of Mind (the equivalent of 'spirit') to the holy and good, the pure and merciful, *Poimandres*, 22 (Scott, *Hermetica*, i. p. 127), with its spiritual results in loving worship, thanksgiving and praise. In the *Asclepius*, iii. 18b (*ibid.* p. 321), 'Mind' is said to be a gift from heaven to those few whose souls are capable of receiving so great a boon. Its intimate blending with soul preserves such men's thought from being ever obstructed by the darkness of error.

[2] There is no such aspiration after union with the Spirit. Its promised action (xiv. 17, xvi. 13), will no longer be needed.

be that Jesus will only manifest himself to believers and not to the world (xiv. 22). But for all that it is the last hour (1 John ii. 18), let the disciples be prepared to meet it. 'Little children,' pleads the Elder, 'abide with him, that if he shall be manifested we may have boldness, and not be ashamed before him at his coming' (ii. 28). In the Spirit it has already taken place. 'The darkness is passing away, and the True Light already shineth' (*ibid.* ii. 8). The hope, which for Paul was an essential element in salvation (Rom. viii. 24), appears in Johannine teaching but once (1 John iii. 3). The sudden transition from an exhausted and decrepit world to the opening promise of the 'age to come' is no longer the centre of anticipation. Above the successions of time is the vision of truth and love and joy in the Eternal.

The dual character of the Gospel teaching which appears in the treatment of the sacraments under the opposite terms of flesh and spirit, thus presents itself again in the contrast between the future *Parousia* of the Son of Man and the indwelling presence of the Father and the Son. A similar divergence may be traced in the associated conceptions of Resurrection and Judgment. In popular expectation the arrival of Christ from heaven would be followed by the summons of the dead from their graves (and the drowned from the sea, Rev. xx. 13) to stand before the tribunal of eternal righteousness.[1] Of this wondrous resurrection a typical example is portrayed as Jesus cried with a loud voice 'Lazarus, come forth.' Such an event would bring the world's history to a close; in the generations of time it would mark 'the last day.' To this event Martha looks forward for her dead brother, 'I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day' (xi. 24); and Jesus promises to raise believers on the same solemn date (vi. 39, 40, 44, 54), where the repetitions imply the importance of the expectation in the midst of a group of ideas pitched in another key, and have frequently led students to view them as editorial

[1] As part of God's purpose it was the judgment seat of God (Rom. xiv. 10); as occupied by Christ it was his (2 Cor. v. 10; cp. Rom. ii. 16, Acts xvii. 31).

additions.[1] The dead are to be gathered for judgment, and to that day believers may look forward with confidence in God's love (1 John iv. 17). By whom will they be judged? Different answers are given to this question which involve seeming contradictions.

Current eschatology receives an emphatic statement (v. 28, 29):

'The hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done ill, unto the resurrection of judgment.'

The award is here determined by conduct, corresponding to the warning of Paul:

'We must all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things *done* in the body, according to what he hath done whether it be good or ill' (2 Cor. v. 10).

Each case is tried before Christ (according to the arrangement of the text) in his character of Son of Man (v. 27; cp. Matt. xxv. 31). It is only with a slight difference that the decision is ascribed to the word which Jesus has spoken, 'the same shall judge him in the last day' (xii. 48). The teaching which embraces all his 'sayings' possesses evidential force, and itself decides the issue, for it is the expression of his personality and purpose of salvation.

But this points to another conception of profound significance. The language of Jesus had the immediate effect of dividing his hearers into two opposite classes, those who acknowledged his claims and those who rejected them. This process of 'sifting' was itself judgment.[2] Believers needed it not; unbelievers had experienced it already; they had placed themselves in the ranks of the condemned (iii. 16-18):

'God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but

[1] The term 'the last day' is not used by other N.T. writers. Peculiarities in the language of Chap. vi. and its position in the Gospel have been already noticed, pp. 420, 426 f.

[2] Cp. the Latin *cribrum*, a sieve, from the same Greek root.

have eternal life. For God sent not the Son into the world to judge the world; but that the world should be saved through him. He that believeth on him is not judged; he that believeth not hath been judged already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God.'

And the terrible consequence of unbelief is exposure to the abiding wrath of God (iii. 36). Judgment is thus no future event, far or near; it is for ever going on wherever the appeal of Jesus is carried by his followers. 'This is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light;' so that after all Jesus can say 'For judgment came I into the world, that they which see not may see; and that they which see may become blind' (ix. 39). For the same reason the Paraclete will continue the function, and 'convict the world in respect of sin' (xvi. 8; *ante*, p. 394). Had not Jesus come as the Light or Revealer, had he not spoken, had he not done the works which none other did, they had not had sin, just as the Apostle Paul could say he had not known sin except through the Law (Rom. vii. 7); but his teaching left them without excuse (xv. 22-24). When the Truth entered the world it began immediately to separate the seeing from the blind. Those whose eyes were opened recognised it at once, like the first disciples when they found the Messiah. Judgment of this kind was a natural discrimination. By their own characters men were self-allotted to one of two opposing groups. Thus though the Son was not sent into the world to judge it but to save it, he immediately became the ground of its moral partition. Just as he said 'I am the Resurrection,' he might have said 'I am the Judgment.' For this was the judgment, that when light came into the world men could not recognise it, though they boasted of their vision. 'Are we also blind'? asked the Pharisees. 'If you were blind,' replied Jesus, 'you would not have sin; but now you say, We see: your sin remaineth' (ix. 41). There is no doom more terrible than not to love the highest when we see it.[1]

[1] This inability is elsewhere ascribed to parentage from the devil (*ante*, p. 391), just as none can believe who are not 'drawn' by God

Those who do love it enter at once upon the blessed life. In a passage of great solemnity (v. 19-26) depicting the love of the Father for the Son, the Father is said to endow him with wondrous powers, summed up in the gift of 'life in himself.' This independent self-subsisting energy he uses for no purposes of his own; he only does what he sees the Father doing. To kill and to make alive (or 'quicken') had been the ancient prerogative of God (2 Kings v. 7); it was in the Father's power to raise the dead in trespasses and sins and give them life. This power he transmits to the Son who quickens whom he will. But the selection is not after all his own. There is no interference or disharmony with the Father's prior choice (vi. 44, 45); the Son is not come from heaven to do his own will (v. 30; vi. 38); he only repeats the Father's acts, and does always what is pleasing in his sight (viii. 29).[1] Those whom he quickens have been already given to him. The Father has passed no judgment on them; that is committed to the Son, so that he may receive equal honour with the Father. When the Son has gathered hearers, he who believes the Author of his mission passes at once out of death into life.[2] For him there is no judgment. The last day with its summons from the grave of ignorance and sin has already arrived. 'The hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.'[3]

(vi. 44). But at the same time Jesus answers the Jews' request for instruction how to 'work the works of God' by bidding them believe on him whom he has sent (vi. 28, 29). The conflict between religious determination and moral responsibility is unreduced.

[1] It was his business to guard those who had been given him, but even he could not override prophecy. The 'son of perdition' must be lost that Scripture might be fulfilled (xvii. 12). The inclusion of a traitor among the Twelve was a common ground of criticism, imperfectly met by the plea that Jesus had himself foreseen the betrayal (vi. 70, 71).

[2] A very rare demand, cp. xiv. 1, 'believe in God, believe also in me'; with v. 24 cp. xii. 44.

[3] The appended verse (26) implies that as the Father has given to the Son to have life in himself, and the Son can do what the Father does, he can give similar intrinsic life to believers. This is expressly connected (vi. 53) with eating the Son's flesh and drinking his blood. But it is everywhere implied in the description of the life thus given as eternal (*woman*). As the case of believers is independent of judgment, the gift of authority to execute judgment on good and evil doers in the

V

What, then, is this life, in what does it consist ? It has its origin in God's love for the world, and his gift of his only Son ' that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life ' (iii. 16). To the fulfilment of this purpose Jesus has given himself, ' I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly ' (x. 10). This life he imparts to whom he pleases, and to his disciples he can say ' Because I live, ye shall live also ' (xiv. 19). Those thus endowed will never perish ; no one shall snatch them out of his hand (x. 28). In place of inheritance in the Kingdom of God in the midst of apocalyptic splendours this life is presented as an exalted fellowship in union with the Father and the Son. Inasmuch as it is a life of spirit it is independent of locality, and needs no Jerusalem from heaven in which to realise it. Nor does it wait for resurrection, it is the privilege of immediate faith. So far as it can be described at all, it is apprehended as the result of a profound experience, ' We speak that we do know ' (iii. 11). It is not a philosophy raised to the highest vision of imagination like Plato's picture of the blessed sights in heaven, ' and the many ways to and fro along which the blessed gods are passing, each one doing his own work ' (*Phaedrus*, 247 A). The phrase ' eternal life ' recurs again and again, but one who has not shared the duties and dangers of the community, or realised the glowing affections knitting the brotherhood together, must not attempt to depict it in the light of common day.[1]

capacity of Son of Man (27) belongs to popular eschatology, which was apparently too strongly entrenched in current belief to be repudiated as plainly as the materialist interpretation of the sacraments (p. 435). In spite of much critical reference of vv. 28, 29, to editorial activity, I incline to think that these verses (with which 27 must be combined) are really original. The language and symbolism of the Lazarus narrative provide for both types of representation. An interesting arrangement of the discourse on a metrical basis of six five-lined stanzas will be found in an essay by Prof. D. H. Müller, *Das Joh. Evang. im Lichte der Strophen-theorie* (Wien, 1909). This treats 27-29 as integral.

[1] It is the Johannine equivalent of ' being made divine ' in the Greek sense, cp. p. 418[3].

Yet some of its aspects are presented by the Evangelist. It is given by Christ, for he has been himself endowed with it by the Father (v. 26). He carries its powers within him, and can distribute them without in any way lessening them in himself. Does he not possess 'Spirit' without measure? This quickening energy is not diminished by being communicated. His 'Fulness' imparts itself inexhaustibly, and eternal life floats forth through grace and truth (i. 16, 17). But it is not transmitted except through some means in deed or word, and it is not effective without fitting response. It is not a little strange that the secret of the new birth from above unfolded to Nicodemus in his nocturnal visit is never named again. The 'Works' serve as foundations for teaching (which is indeed itself a 'work'), and this is sufficient in the case of the Samaritans to win belief; just as Jesus foresees the fruits from the future preaching of the disciples (xvii. 20), engaged in works greater than his own (xiv. 12). And for salvation belief is the essential condition, 'He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life' (iii. 36), or, with a rare variation in the object of faith, 'He that heareth my word, and believeth him that sent me, hath eternal life' (v. 24). When Jesus could be heard on earth no more, the record of his words and works would have the same quickening power, and this was the purpose, the Evangelist tells us, for which he wrote (xx. 31). The Helper might guide believers into the discovery and apprehension of more truth, but they must first have realised the truth as it was in Jesus.

Belief, however, did not always issue in this result. The narrative perhaps reflects the sequel of many current controversies, a temporary mood of faith followed by renewed hostility. The apparent success of his first visit to Jerusalem (ii. 23) is twice repeated (vii. 31; viii. 30), but it is not long before the new converts are denounced as out of their father the devil (viii. 44); faith has no root, and withers in an hour. Even if not due to satanic parentage, unbelief implies at least the absence of a divine element in their religious experience, 'Ye have not

God's *logos* abiding in you' (v. 38).[1] Different aspects of the awakening of belief and the communication of life are portrayed in the miracles of healing. The cripple recovers the power to walk, no longer in the desert of sin but along the path of righteousness; the blind youth is endowed with sight by which he can recognise and worship the Son of God; Lazarus is recalled from the grave of his dead self. Belief (or faith) was the summary expression for realising a new order of being. In contact with the teaching of Jesus fresh energies seemed to enter the hearer's soul. His admission into a fellowship bound together by common trust and love aroused emotions which he had never experienced before. He became conscious of inward forces hitherto unimagined. At first, doubtless, he often moved about in worlds unrealised, then he felt them reshaping his own nature, and revealing to him mighty agencies of unseen 'Spirit.' These became to him actual presences, arousing thoughts, prompting purposes, begetting aspirations, which he could only ascribe to Divine Companions within his soul. They were identified with transcendent personalities, God, Christ, Father, Son, Spirit, and they lifted him into a timeless realm where the distinction between 'the age that now is' and 'the age to come' disappeared. The 'last day' vanished from the perspectives of the future. Hope was merged in enjoyment,[2] the eternal was actually present, and faith became certitude or knowledge. 'We believe and know that thou art God's Holy One' (vi. 69).

The Evangelist, though he was afterwards called *Theologos*, was not a systematic theologian. While knowledge is generally presented as the sequel of belief, it is

[1] The scope of *logos* here is not quite certain. It is usually identified with the Scriptures, but the same phrase is used affirmatively in commendation of the young men, 1 John ii. 14, who are said to have conquered the Evil One, without any reference to written testimony. It may have been a current term for 'revelation.' To the Jew this came through the Scriptures, to the Christian through Christ. 'Abiding' signifies a real spiritual presence, so that the 'Word' has a semi-personal character. The parallelism of the second clause with Christ's victory over the world implies the possession of a cognate power, though the scope of its activity is personal instead of universal.

[2] 'We are saved by hope,' says Paul; but hope is not named by John, save in 1 John iii. 4.

also apparently sometimes a prior stage, 'We have known and believed the love which God hath in us' (1 John iv. 16); [1] or, 'they received the words which thou gavest me, and knew that I came forth from thee, and believed that thou didst send me' (xvii. 8), where three mental acts are implied, acceptance of the teaching, recognition of Jesus' divine origin, and faith that he had not come of himself, but had been sent as part of God's purpose. Knowledge, however, was not complete at once. It admitted of degrees and progressive increase, 'that ye may know and understand' (x. 38), where the different English verbs only represent different tenses of one Greek.[2] The difficulties and objections raised by the disciples at the last meal, and their subsequent desertion, show that their previous knowledge and final 'knowledge and belief' (xvi. 30) were a very inadequate protection for their loyalty. The Evangelist sought to combine incongruous data, the historic fact of their flight (xvi. 32), and the picture of completed revelation by Jesus and its acceptance by his followers. When the Teacher was no longer there in person, he might still be 'seen' by the eye of faith (vi. 40), which would discern through him yet another even more august Being, the Father who had sent him (xii. 45). With the wider outlook of a later day a fresh Messenger from heaven is promised, the Helper who will not only bring past sayings to their remembrance but will lead them forward to truth not yet declared.[3] Eternal Life is then defined as knowledge of the only Real

[1] The two perfects of the Greek verbs imply that the condition, once begun, continues; the R.V. consequently translates 'we know'; for the same reason we might also render 'and believe.' The English text disguises the identity, and partly hides the precedence of 'knowledge.'

[2] It may be further noted that two separate verbs are employed by the Evangelist with the same meaning—veiled in English as we have only one—sometimes even in the same context, *e.g.* vii. 26-29, or even the same sentence, xiv. 7, precluding all attempts at literary partition on such grounds.

[3] The term 'guide' (xvi. 13) was apparently a current word in the religious sphere. Cp. Matt. xv. 14, xxiii. 16, 24; Luke vi. 39; Acts viii. 31; Rom. ii. 19. Hermes appears as 'guide' in the text edited by Dieterich (*Abraxas*, 1891, p. 12, l. 14). 'Seek a leader who will guide you to the doors of knowledge,' *Hermetica*, vii. 2. Cp. the function of Jesus in declaring 'God' (i. 18, and *ante*, p. 331).

God and him whom he sent, viz. Jesus Christ (xvii. 3).[1] Inasmuch as Jesus had communicated some of his transcendent life to his disciples, they were permitted to share in some of his powers. In their relation to him they partially reproduced characteristics of his relation to God. As he died and rose again, so they had passed from death to life. If he had overcome the world, so they also had overcome the Evil One. As he had known the Father, so should they also know. The Father and the Son, so united in common life that they could actually be called *hen* ('one'),[2] naturally know each other (x. 15). Mutual knowledge is correlated with mutual love, which leads the Father to show him the mysteries of his 'works' (v. 19, 20), and to impart to him the words committed to him (xvii. 8).[3] He is thus fully conscious of God's love for the world. In sublime obedience he accepts unreservedly the mission which it involves. He lays down his transcendent glory to assume a human personality; with the same devotion to the Father's will he awaits the Cross; and in all this he experiences a wondrous joy (xv. 11).

Here is the heavenly type of the duties and privileges of the disciple. The knowledge of the Father's will possessed by the Son will have its counterpart in them. They, too, will realise that they have been sent by their Teacher as he was sent by God (xvii. 18). They have received the words given to him (xvii. 8); they will be enabled to do yet greater works (xiv. 12). As he laid down his life for man, they will recognise the same duty towards the brethren (1 John iii. 16); and thus is God's love reproduced in them and made perfect (*ib.* iv. 16). In such an august communion help given to others to realise it is the fulfilment of joy (*ib.* i. 4). The words of farewell blend love and joy as Paul had blended them,

[1] A verse ascribed by Dr. Garvie to the Editor. On the adjective *alēthinos* cp. *ante*, p. 428[2].

[2] The neuter number implies indissoluble conjunction (x. 30). The same expression describes the future partnership of believers in this sublime association (xvii. 21).

[3] In xiv. 10 it is implied that the words are themselves works and have operative power, so they are themselves said to be 'life,' vi. 63, 68.

with peace. 'My peace I give unto you . . . These things have I spoken unto you that in me ye may have peace.' To possess 'awareness' of the Father and the Son, to be joined in this marvellous union with the brotherhood of believers, keeping Christ's commandments and abiding in his love, as he kept his Father's commandments and abode in his love—this was to share in the life of the Son, to know God and Jesus Christ whom he had sent. To be saved was to realise—in rare moments of elevation—the heightened sense of Being which such contact with ineffable Reality engendered. The meaning of existence became clear. There 'in spirit and in truth' was the blessedness of worship for which the hour is always 'Now.' There was the essence of eternal life.

Was such an experience ever approached in the Judaism out of which Christianity emerged, or in the religious communities by which it was surrounded? The religious leaders of Israel had again and again presented 'knowledge of the Lord' (or Yahweh) as the summary of the divine demands. On the national side, indeed, the vicissitudes of Israel's history in chastisement or restoration served to display Yahweh's righteous sovereignty, or convince surrounding powers of his might.[1] But within the little kingdoms of the eighth century the phrase acquired a special ethical meaning. In opening the Lord's controversy with his people because there was no truth (faithfulness) nor mercy nor knowledge of God in the land, Hosea denounced broken oaths, murder, theft, adultery (iv. 12). When Jeremiah, several generations later, held up Zedekiah's father as an example of royal duty, he exclaimed, 'He judged the cause of the poor and needy; was not this to know me? saith the Lord' (xxii. 16). More intimately still, 'Let him that glorieth glory in this that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth' (ix. 24).[2] In the great argument of the Babylonian prophet, founded on Yahweh's

[1] Cp. the reiterated phrase in Ezekiel, 'And ye (they) shall know that I am Yahweh.'

[2] Cp. the prophecy of the New Covenant, xxxi. 31-34.

creative might and his providential direction of the march of Cyrus, he appeals to the captive people in Yahweh's name as witnesses with a new phrase, 'that ye may know and believe me and understand that I am he.'[1] Of the language in which piety clothed itself in many affecting symbols of intimacy when God was realised as Shield and Tower and Rock, as Light and Sun, as Portion, Hope, Joy, Trust, Maker, Father, every reader of the Psalms is well aware. The Divine Companionship was a permanent possession, the source, the guide, the stay, the goal of life.

Later Judaism was not lacking in similar consciousness of 'a Presence not to be put by.' The little group of poems known as the Odes of Solomon whose origin is so perplexingly obscure (*ante*, p. 276), makes a like appeal:

> 'Hear the word of truth, and receive the knowledge of the Most High. . . . Understand my knowledge, ye who know me in truth' (viii. 9, 13).
>
> The dwelling-place of the Word is man,
> And its truth is love.
> Blessed are they who by means thereof have understood everything,
> And have known the Lord in his truth' (xii. 11).

And with Christian application—

> 'I love the Beloved, and my soul loves him,
> And where his rest is, there also am I' (iii. 3).

The testimony of Alexandrian Judaism in the writings of Philo is similar. He knows that 'knowledge of God gained by imitation of Him and likeness to Him is man's highest good,'[2] and that 'to be filled with spiritual love of God is the best definition of immortal life.'[3] He has been conscious again and again of 'an enjoyment of light, a most penetrating sight,' when he discerned that what was shown him, 'so worthy of being beheld, of being contemplated, of being beloved, was the perfect Good.'[4]

[1] Isai. xliii. 10; cp. John viii. 24, 28.

[2] Dr. Inge, in Hastings' *E.R.E.* i. p. 311, on Alexandrian theology.

[3] Montefiore, *The Old Testament and After*, p. 517.

[4] *Migration of Abraham*, 7 f., Cohn-Wendland, ii. p. 275 § 35.

The soul thus 'divinised'[1] 'receives a clear manifestation of the Uncreated, so as to grasp Him from Himself.'[2] In these high moods when the soul is filled with divine light, God is apprehended with his two most ancient powers, the Creative and the Regal, on either side, so readily did religious imagination conceive his attributes as visible forms.[3]

In the philosopher's lecture-room the dialect is different, the emotion restrained, but the experience is of the same order.[4] Amid the voices of the sceptics in the first century Epictetus demands thankfulness to the gods who have 'produced in the human mind that fruit by which they designed to show us the truth which relates to happiness.' More intimately he pleads, 'When a man has this peace (freedom from sorrow, envy, anger, etc.), proclaimed by God through Reason (*Logos*), is he not content when he is alone?' No man is an orphan, he affirmed as he justified Herakles for leaving his children, 'it is the Father who takes care of all men always and continuously.'[5] Strangely mingled with the gibberish of magical formulæ is the disciple's prayer to the Divine object of his mystical vision, 'Abide with me in my soul, leave me not'; he entreats that he may be 'presented for the birth to immortality, that he may be born again in understanding . . . and the Sacred Spirit may breathe through him.'[6] 'Come to me, Lord Hermes,' cried another, 'like babes into women's wombs,' and the union was so close that he could say, 'Thou art I, and I am thou.'[7] After his dedication by

[1] *Allegories of the Sacred Laws*, iii. 14, ἐκθειασθῇ, Cohn-Wendland, i. p. 122, l. 21, the equivalent of early Christian 'deification,' cp. Inge, *Christian Mysticism* (Bampton Lectures, 1899), p. 356 ff.

[2] Montefiore, *ibid.* p. 529.

[3] *On Abraham*, 24 f.; Cohn-Wendland, iv. §§ 121, 124. On Rabbinical Mysticism cp. Abelson, *The Immanence of God in Rabbinical Literature* (1912), p. 340. For religious groups of three, cp. J. E. C., *Theism in Mediæval India*, p. 275.

[4] Norden, *Agnostos Theos* (1913), p. 99, attaches special importance to the teaching of the Syrian, Posidonius, of Apamea, to whom Cicero listened as a young man at Rhodes.

[5] *Discourses* (tr. Matheson), i. 4, 32; iii. 13, 12, cp. John xvi. 32, 33; iii. 24, 15, cp. John xiv. 18.

[6] Dieterich, *Mithras-Liturgie*, 4, l. 8; 14, l. 24.

[7] *Ibid.* p. 97. Cp. Angus, *Mystery Religions and Christianity*, p. 106 ff.

Poimandres Hermes prays that he 'may never fall away from that knowledge which matches with our being' (i. 32). In a subsequent discourse *gnosis* is said to be the end or goal of science (*Epistêmê*).[1] It is attained through Re-birth, when the soul has been cleansed by the Powers of God, which build up within him the body of Reason (*Logos*). Truth comes to it, followed by the Good, with Life and Light; he sees all in mind, and with his intellectual being thus composed he realises his unity with the universe, and, sharing in Deity, knows what Re-birth is (xiii. 8 ff.).

By such figures did the higher thought of the Empire seek to express the possibility of the union of man with God. The Fourth Evangelist conceived it as historic fact, and in the person of Jesus as the Christ and Son of God expounded it as the secret of eternal life.

> 'The very God! think, Abib; dost thou think?
> So, the All-Great, were the All-Loving too—
> So, through the thunder comes a human voice
> Saying, "O heart I made, a heart beats here!
> Face, my hands fashioned, see it in myself!
> Thou hast no power nor mayest conceive of mine,
> But love I gave thee, with myself to love,
> And thou must love me who have died for thee!"'

This was necessarily a gift open to all; the bread of God gives life to the world (vi. 33). Destined for the whole human race, the offer was communicated through a divine Person who assumed manhood. It had consequently a national and local origin; it was first announced by a Jew to Jews. But its universal character had been apprehended by the Apostle Paul, who proclaimed freedom from Israel's law when he had learned that Christ lived in him, and that consequently Jew and Greek were one in Christ.[2] It has already been observed that in the view

[1] *Hermetica*, x. 10, 'the gift of God' (the passage is struck out by Scott). For the process of 'deification' through beholding the beauty of the Good, cp. 6. The ascension upwards to the Father and entrance into God is described in i. 26.

[2] Gal. iii. 26, where the numeral is masculine. Ct. John x. 30, xvii. 21, *ante*, p. 356.

of the Evangelist not only was all conflict about the obligation of the law long past, it might almost be said that it could never have occurred. The High Priest foresaw that Jesus would die that he might gather into one (*hen*) the children of God that were scattered abroad (xi. 51 ; *ante*, p. 267). But were these all that were to be assembled ? The Son was sent, we are told, because ' God so loved the world ' ; loved it, apparently, when it lay in the Evil One and could not help itself. Would it always continue ignorant, angry, and hostile, or would it ever be enabled to conquer itself ? Could those who were of their father the Devil never be redeemed ? There are hints about Antichrist,[1] and warnings against the spirit of error ; there is a terrible suggestion of a sin unto death for which prayer will avail nothing (1 John v. 16) ; there is abiding wrath for unbelievers (John iii. 36), is there a region where it operates, and for ever ? Are such the reasons why on his last night Jesus will not pray for the world (xvii. 9), which one might suppose most needed praying for since he was sent to save it, but only for those who have been given to him, those who should be secure against sin as they have been born of God ? Had he not said that if he was lifted up from the earth he would draw all men unto himself (xii. 32) ? If the darkness passes away, and the true light already shines, will not all ultimately see it ? The Prince of this world has been cast out ; in what void he disappears we are not told. Does he there shrivel into nought, or gather an unhallowed multitude ? His throne is vacated, will not the Truth take his seat upon it, and even at last incorporate his Adversary in the sphere of Good ? That is, possibly, the final vision, though hinted so briefly that it has largely passed unnoticed.[2] The unity of the disciples with each other, and with the Father and the Son, will be so surpassingly wonderful that it will draw all eyes to itself. At last the world will believe that Christ really was sent from above (xvii. 21, 22), and the mighty fact of God's

[1] 1 John ii. 18, iv. 3 ; possibly as some eminent interpreters think, in John v. 43.

[2] Cp. the Jewish prayer cited by Montefiore, *ante*, p. 21.

saving purpose will be known by all. But such belief and knowledge *is* salvation, or æonian life. So, as Jesus goes forth to die, behind the Roman soldiers in the garden and his judges in the High Priest's hall, behind Pilate and behind the Cross, there rises over the gloom the glory of a world in which God, as St. Paul said, shall be all in all. It is the last word of Christian idealism. Beyond the conflicts of time it points to the eternal victory of Truth and Love.

EPILOGUE

THE JOHANNINE LETTERS

'HEREIN is my Father glorified,' said Jesus, 'that ye bear much fruit' (John xv. 8). What kind of fruit was borne by the 'new teaching' and its preachers in the Asiatic community of Christians for whom the Gospel was first written? The Gospel is itself its finest product, how far did its influence extend? Only scattered glimpses are afforded us as the author of the original work summed up its lessons in the brief series of meditations which have been preserved for us under the title of the First Epistle of John, to which are traditionally attached two brief letters in the name of 'the Elder.'[1] The circumstances under which these documents were written are obscure. No clues are supplied to the place or date of their origin. Their relations can be inferred only from a comparison of their contents. 2 John is addressed to 'Electa Kyria,' where each word has been proved to be a possible proper name, 'the elect Lady,' or 'the lady Electa.' She has, however, numerous children, some of whom are commended for their loyal obedience to the truth, and the quasi-personal address soon passes into plural exhortation. The writer has laboured among them as a missionary (according to the Revisers' reading in 8),[2] and is anxious for the maintenance of his teaching. It is widely held,

[1] Critical opinion is not yet agreed about the relative priority of the Gospel and 1 John, and some students leave the whole question open as to identity of authorship, simply recognising their origin in the same school of faith and life. In the view here taken the Gospel (in its original form) was the earlier.

[2] The marginal reading 'ye' has the very early support of Irenæus.

therefore, that the letter was really intended for a Church which the Elder hoped shortly to visit, and to which her ' elect sister ' (13) sent greetings. 3 John is an unmistakable communication again in the name of the Elder to a single correspondent, the beloved Gaius. Who he was, and where he lived, there is no evidence. Whether he belonged to the Church designated the ' elect Lady ' may be probable, but cannot be certainly affirmed. The author of 1 John uses ' we ' and ' I ' alternately, speaking in the plural on behalf of the Fellowship, and in the singular as an aged witness of the Church's great tradition ; and he pours forth his affection towards the whole community around him in the filial relation of his ' little children.' How far are we justified in ascribing these documents to a single hand ?

I

That the second and third letters are closely connected is plain. To the Elect Lady and to Gaius the Elder sends the assurance ' whom I love.' He sees them both ' walking in truth ' (II. 4 ; III. 3). To both he has many things to say, but they are reserved for the visit which he hopes to pay, and the intimacies of speech ' face to face ' (II. 12 ; III. 13, 14). The same kind of phraseological contact connects them with I.[1] To ' walk in truth ' is the same as to ' walk in the light ' (I. i. 7). The Elder does not impose a new commandment (II. 5), nor does the writer of I. ii. 7 ; it was an old commandment from the beginning that we should love one another (II. 5 ; I. iii. 11). The reality of the incarnation is denied by the same opponents (II. 7 ; I. iv. 2). The true disciple has both the Father and the Son (II. 9 ; I. ii. 23, v. 12). Each letter is written for the ' fulfilment of joy,' though the texts are not certain whose (II. 12 ; I. i. 4, margin). Stress is laid by the Elder on ' bearing witness ' (III. 3, 6, 12), though in different connexions, which corresponds with the emphasis on testimony in I. i. 2, iv. 14, v. 9-11. He is ' of God ' who

[1] Cp. the idiomatic analysis (in contrast to the ascription of II and III to the prophet of the Apocalypse) by Dr. Charles, *Revelation* (I.C.C.), vol. i. pp. xxxiv-xxxvi.

does good, he who does evil has not seen him (III. 11 ; I. iii. 6, 10). Echoes even of the language of the Gospel are heard in the note to Gaius. 'Our witness is true,' says the Elder (III. 12), 'My witness is true,' says Jesus (viii. 13, 14 ; cp. v. 31, 32). Phrases are thrown into parallel forms : 'Greater joy have I none than this' (III. 4), 'Greater love hath no man than this' (John xv. 13) ; 'I have many things to write unto thee' (III. 13), 'I have many things to say unto you' (John xvi. 12). The connexion of I with the Gospel language and thought is of the closest kind, and if the identity of authorship in the three 'letters' be admitted, the ascription of the Gospel to the Elder will receive important support.

The First Epistle is no ordinary 'letter.' Like the so-called Epistle to the Hebrews it has no address. It contains no salutations, it conveys no personal news. Nor does it, like the letter to the Romans, undertake a consecutive theological exposition ; or, like First Corinthians, deal with difficulties of faith and practice. With the brief terms in which the letters to the seven Churches of the Apocalypse are written, it has no affinity. Its blame and its praise are adapted to differing conditions ; in spite of one or two common words its vocabulary belongs to another idiom of the spiritual life. Rather is it a series of reflections and exhortations founded on them, in which thought plays tenderly round certain central themes with frequent iteration. Difficulties and anxieties cannot be wholly concealed, but the writer breathes an atmosphere of lofty elevation above the world as he dwells on the fellowship of the brethren with the Father and the Son.

Here are the same contrasts on which the Gospel story is built, between those who are 'of God' or 'of the truth,' and those who are 'of the world' ; between light and darkness, between love and hate, between truth and falsehood, between life and death, between the children of God and the children of the Devil. Here is the same view of the mission and function of the Son. He has come in the flesh to be the Saviour of the world. He has been manifested to take away sins. The believer who 'walks

in the light,' who ' does the truth,' who ' abides in love,' is enabled to ' know God,' he possesses ' life.' The darkness is still the deadly enemy of the light ; to walk in the darkness is to tread the way of death, but its power is declining, the darkness is passing away, the Evil One is being vanquished by the energy of the young, the true light already shines. The conditions laid down by Jesus for the blessed life have been fulfilled : ' If a man love me he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him ' (John xiv. 23). The word is the commandment of love, and Christian experience has realised the promise, 'If we love one another, God abideth in us, and his love is perfected in us ; hereby we know that we abide in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit ' (I. iv. 13). Differences may no doubt be noted both in language and thought. The two great affirmations ' God is light ' and ' God is love ' do not occur in the Gospel, though they lie immediately beneath its surface. Jesus is the propitiation for our sins by his cleansing blood ; he, and not the Spirit, is the Advocate or Helper (cp. John xiv. 16 ; cp. p. 393). To sincere confession forgiveness is assured. The end is nearer, it is ' the last hour.' Antichrist is already in the field ; the *parousia* (ii. 28) is almost in sight. In dealing with the relation of the believer to God the term Father, which is the special correlate of the Son, recedes into the background (ii. 22, 23) ; thus, in our own self-condemnation as our heart lies open before him, it is from the Infinite Source of life and love who knoweth all things that restoration and assurance come (iii. 20). There is a directness and immediacy of divine communion in which the historic figure of Jesus has no part. Paul, even when he has identified the Lord with the Spirit, can never forget that he was first Jesus, and the image in his mind is of ' him crucified.'

The First Letter is thus in the closest alliance with the Gospel, and implies for it a common source in the teaching of the Elder. But it is not concerned with the story of the manifestation of the Son so much as with the believer's life in God, and God's love in him. There is, therefore,

no reference to the Gospel scenes, no quotations from its sayings save the commandment of love, and little progress or continuity of thought. An analogy in literary form has been found in the brief prologue (i. 1-4), and an apparent conclusion (v. 13 ; cp. John xx. 30, 31), followed by a sort of summary of detached thoughts, old and new. The curious repetitions with altered tenses in ii. 12-14 have puzzled all students ; had the writer really issued an earlier communication, and was it (as Prof. H. H. Wendt has recently suggested) [1] our Second Letter ? It is more significant to note that the Letter has been called forth by the dangerous divisions in the Church, and the consequent loss of brotherly love, due to the promulgation of a new doctrine concerning Jesus Christ. Different types of thought now ranged under the name of Gnostic were already threatening the security of the venerable tradition of his Messiahship (cp. pp. 265, 285). Associated with them were unspiritual claims to have fellowship with God, to be without sin, and to refuse all confession (i. 6, 8, 10). The new teachers boasted of their knowledge (ii. 4), they professed to be in the light ; but their hatred of the brethren proved that they were really walking in darkness. In breaking up the unity of the Fellowship, whose spirit of love they thus set at nought, they showed themselves to be really antichrists (ii. 18). The warning that many false prophets would appear (Mark xiii. 22) was being fulfilled only too truly by the denial that Jesus came in the flesh. Such men, whether Cerinthus on the one part, or the teachers who earned the name of Docetists in later times, were guilty of ' dissolving ' the person of Christ by supposing either that its divine element left him before he suffered, or that his humanity was but a phantasmal appearance which could not consequently suffer at all.[2] There were men who rejected the affirmation that Jesus came ' by water and blood,' with baptism and death, marking the beginning and the end of his public

[1] See his article ' Die Beziehung unseres Erstes Johannesbriefes auf den Zweiten ' in the *Z.N.T.W.*, 1922, Heft 2.

[2] 1 John iv. 3. For ' dissolveth ' cp. the valuable exposition by Dr. Gore, *Epistles of St. John*, p. 170. Cp. *ante*, p. 286.

manifestation, and admitted a coming by water only (v. 6). He might be divine and human at the outset in the Jordan, he was human only on the cross. The Christ had left him and returned to heaven.[1]

II

The writer's object, 'That ye may know that ye have eternal life' (v. 13), is not identical with the purpose of the Gospel, 'That ye may believe, and that believing ye may have life in his name' (xx. 31). The early stage of belief is passed. Faith is assured, but while the Church is torn by oppositions, its consequences, its duties, its privileges, its joys, are not fully realised. There is no stress on impending danger, such as is hinted in the last words of Jesus (John xvi. 2). The apprehension of persecution testing the courage of the brethren, and only to be countered by the hope of immortal rewards, which breaks out again and again in the Apocalypse, breeds no disquiet in this atmosphere of love. How calm is the remark on the self-sacrifice of Christ, 'And we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren' (iii. 16). The call

[1] This seems to be the meaning of this obscure passage. Upon it is apparently founded the strange incident reported in John xix. 34, 35, and confirmed in 37 by a misquotation from Zech. xii. 10. The Johannine conclusion of the Passion ignores the testimony of the centurion and the rending of the temple-veil (Mark xv. 38, 39), and having previously brought the beloved disciple on the scene apparently invokes his witness to the action of the soldier who pierced the side of Jesus so that straightway there came out blood and water. The terms are here in reverse order. What is their meaning, when such issue is physiologically unaccountable? Some early interpreters, assuming their reality, treated them as proofs of the real humanity of Jesus—no phantasm—so that he actually died, and to this view Zahn (on the Gospel, 1908, p. 655) still adheres. Another line of Protestant explanation has seen in the blood a summary term for redemption, and in the water a symbol of life-giving energy, or less definitely 'the cleansing and vivifying power which followed from his death and life' (Westcott). But various modern commentators have found here in accordance with Catholic piety an application of the sacramental principle in the mysteries of Baptism and the Eucharist. The cross was the mode of exaltation of Jesus to that 'glory' which he had with the Father before the creation of the world (cp. p. 400), and from that lofty sphere streamed the power which gave their efficacy to the two sacraments of the Church. The passage interrupts the connexion of 33 and 36 which identify Jesus with the paschal lamb, and has the air of an addition like that in xxi. 24 (*ante*, p. 251).

was so plain it hardly needed to be stated. The informer might at any moment be at the door; within dwelt one who was ready, for he had overcome the world. The revelation which it was the function of Jesus to communicate had done its work; the disciple had entered into a spiritual fellowship in which death did not count.

This fellowship is founded on a great tradition of things seen and heard, summed up in the 'Word of Life.' The exact application of the phrase is not easy to determine. Like 'water of life' or 'tree of life' it may denote the 'word' or teaching which imparts life, and has analogies with such expressions as 'the words (*rhēmata*) of this life,' or 'the word (*logos*) of salvation' (Acts v. 20; xiii. 26). With other modifications of meaning it can denote a teaching about life, or about Christ as life, or even the word proclaimed by the life. It is not necessary to decide; at any rate it includes the whole manifestation of the life which was in Christ, and was communicated through him to the Church, uniting the faithful with the Father and the Son. There was the beginning of a new creation to which the companions of Jesus and those who followed him bore witness. The actual memories have been transmuted into fresh modes of symbolic experience, so real that they can be described in a crescendo of sense forms, hearing, sight, touch, as they are handed on to later generations. The testimony of the Fellowship is thus preserved in unbroken continuity, and bears with it an apostolic sanction. To this 'beginning,' and to all that flowed from it uninterruptedly in the inner life of successions of believers—where the 'beginning' started anew in each conversion as the significance of Christ suddenly broke upon the view—the Elder makes frequent appeal: 'The word which ye had from the beginning' (ii. 7); 'let that abide in you which ye heard from the beginning' (ii. 24); 'the message which ye heard from the beginning' (iii. 11); 'that which we had from the beginning' (II. 5). Here was the source of the brethren's trust, 'Ye know him which is from the beginning' (ii. 13). Is this a different 'beginning' from the rest? Readers who start with recollections of the Prologue to the Gospel,

unconscious of what is to come, naturally revert to the solemn phrase, 'In the beginning was the Word.' But those who observe that the writer's theme is the Life of a real Person, and the preposition is changed to denote the starting point of a new revelation, may realise that the Elder is not looking to the timeless antecedents of the Eternal Son in the bosom of the Father; but to the beginning of his manifestation and the ingathering of those who could receive him.[1]

What, then, are the nature and object of the manifestation? That it was in the flesh, that it came in the person of a man who entered on his work through baptism, and completed it upon the cross, we have seen already. It is perhaps surprising that the Elder never alludes to the testimony of word or deed comprised between these two acts. The reason is that there is a third witness whose attestation binds the other two into a unity, the Spirit, which, as the Truth (v. 7) is really another aspect of the Son himself.[2] It is thus a divine witness, due ultimately to God himself. It consists in the conscious possession of eternal life, which is God's own gift, imparted through union with the Son. The believer has this witness in him (v. 10), and men are divided into those who, having the Son, have also the life, and those who have neither. Against the violators of the faith the Elder flings the bitter word 'Antichrists,' but he makes no charge against them of Balaam's teaching (Rev. ii. 14, 20), and their way of life is not impugned. He is content to rest on the

[1] This is not, of course, the general interpretation, either ancient or modern, but it appears to me to arise from the repeated usage of the Elder himself. Cp. E. von Dobschutz, *Christian Life in the Primitive Church* (1904), p. 219; H. H. Wendt, *Z.N.T.W.* (1922), Heft 1, p. 38.

[2] At this point was added the famous verse retained in our Authorised Version from the Textus Receptus, 'For there are three that bare record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bare witness in earth, the Spirit,' etc. The oldest Greek manuscript containing them belongs to the fifteenth century, and betrays the use of the Vulgate. No independent Greek writer quotes them. But they had become known to Latin writers of the second half of the fifth century, and earlier still they appear to have been used in Spain by Priscillian, who was martyred in 385. They are there cited (in a different order) as John's, *sicut Joannes ait*, and they gradually made their way into the Latin versions. Cp. Brooke, *The Epistles of S. John* (I.C.C.), 1912, p. 154 ff.

immovable certainty of experience, 'we know,' thrice repeated with emphasis in the summary (v. 18-20). The members of the Fellowship are knit together by a common understanding that they 'know him that is true'—the 'only true God' as the Gospel has it (xvii. 3)—and that knowledge means that in the august mystery of his being his light, his love, his life, they have a share. 'This is the true God and eternal life' made known through his Son Jesus Christ.[1] The significant adjective 'true' (*alēthinos*, 'real,' cp. p. 428[2]) is thrice repeated, and gives emphasis to the final injunction 'keep yourselves from idols,' whether the lovely images of altars and temples (cp. 1 Thess. i. 9), or, perhaps less probably, the false speculations of the 'Gnosis' advocated by the rivals of the Church. Thus the appeal of the opening of the letter is repeated in the postscript at its close.

III

Filled with the rich experience interpreted as fellowship with the Father and the Son, the Elder sends forth his exposition of the message entrusted to him and his co-believers. If it was ever addressed to a special community, the limiting name has been dropped, and the writer's aim has been widened to bring the truth to those who did not yet possess it—'that ye also may have fellowship with us.' The days of his active labour are over (II. 8), he can do no more than bear his testimony to the wonder of the divine life in the soul that dwells in God.

The essence of the message, the foundation on which the whole depends, is that 'God is light.' The words are simple, and might be used in various connexions. Jewish piety, recalling the Psalmist's splendid confidence, 'The Lord is my light and my salvation,' might say with Philo

[1] The last words of 20, 'in his Son Jesus Christ,' are identified by the Revisers' *even* with 'him that is true,' and the concluding statement 'this is the true God' is then interpreted of Christ. Where, then, is the antecedent of the pronoun 'his'? The phrase surely describes the mode of union with the Revealed through the Revealer. Those who have received the power of discernment communicated by Christ have learned to apprehend 'the true God' through him who sent him, and this apprehension *is* eternal life (cp. *ante*, p. 448 ff.).

that 'God is the first light.'[1] Philosophy might lay it down that 'the Father of the universe is life and light.'[2] But to the Christian the phrase carried a tremendous meaning, for over against the light lay the darkness. Between these two there could be no compromise. They were in absolute and perpetual opposition. Under these mighty agencies was the whole field of existence embraced. The sphere of light contained all truth, all faithfulness, all purity, all righteousness, all love. Within the darkness lay error, deceit, falsehood, hatred, violence, lust. And there, enveloped by it, were all the other products of the spirit of man, law, civilisation, science, art, poetry, philosophy, embodying the gradual growth of its domestic affections, the rising elevation of its aims, its efforts, its aspirations, under a common condemnation. 'We are of God, and the whole world lieth in the Evil One.'[3] By what authority was a judgment so sweeping and peremptory sent forth, involving past and present in the blackness of starless night? A divine ray had been shot out from heaven in the person of Jesus Christ. In spite of the activity of the Devil who filled the world with his children, God still loved it, and sent his Son to save it. 'To this end was the Son of God manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil' (iii. 8). On this act of the Father's condescension the Elder meditated with adoring gratitude. To recognise and appropriate it is to secure the supreme privilege of union with him, as the believer learns with an awful joy that God abides in him, and he in God (iv. 15): 'Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called children of God, and (adds the Elder with exquisite simplicity of assurance) *we are*' (iii. 1). Here was the tremendous new fact of

[1] *On Dreams*, i. 13, Cohn-Wendland, iii. p. 221, § 75; Drummond, *Philo Judæus*, ii. p. 40.

[2] *Poimandres*, 21.

[3] It is true that the Elder admits that 'he that doeth righteousness is righteous' (iii. 7). But it is implied that no one can make righteousness the foundation of his daily conduct who has not been born of God. He does not recognise the problem which Dr. Gore admits is now so common,—'to find the genuinely Christian character where intellectually there is nothing but doubt and even denial' (*Epistles of St. John*, 1921, p. 160).

experience. From children of the Devil they had become children of God. It might be expressed in more than one way ; they had passed out of death into life (iii. 14) ; they had an anointing from the Holy One like the Messiah himself (ii. 20) ; they, too, had received the gift of the Spirit (iii. 24). How this mighty change had been wrought is left hidden in the secrets of each soul. No clue is given to time or place or method, to the urgency of missionary preaching, to reception into the Church, to the solemnity of baptism. One fact is a sufficient proof of its reality, 'We know . . . because we love the brethren.'

Before this wondrous transformation could begin, a reckoning must be made with human sin. The Son was manifested to take away sins (iii. 5) ; had he not been described as God's lamb which took away the sin of the world (John i. 29) ? A new term is now applied to him. More than the Advocate for sinful men before the Father, supporting their prayers for forgiveness, he is the propitiation not only for the transgressions of believers, but on a universal scale for the sins of the whole world (ii. 1, 2 ; iv. 10). The term occurs here only in the New Testament, though a kindred word is used by Paul (Rom. iii. 25). It had been employed by the Greek translators of the Old Testament to represent no less than four Hebrew words, among them 'forgiveness' (Psalm cxxx. 4). It was also the equivalent of the ritual term *kippurîm* (Lev. xxv. 9), literally 'coverings.' The theory of sacrifice rested on the belief that the victim 'covered' the offender's guilt so that it was hidden from the Deity's attention ; and this was applied to the solemn day when atonement was made in the sanctuary for Israel's sins. By the sacrifice of one of two goats designated by lot for the sin offering the national transgressions were covered from the sight of God, who took no further cognisance of them. They were then committed to the other goat, to be carried away into the wilderness. This was the practice, founded on ancient ceremonial, of the annual 'propitiation.' Around the idea gathered the cognate notion of intercession. In the heavenly worship the ministering archangels made propitiation to the Lord for the sins of

ignorance committed by the righteous.[1] The similar function of intercession was ascribed to Christ by Paul, as he pictured him pleading for the saints at the right hand of God (Rom. viii. 34). 'Propitiation,' by a well-known linguistic usage, stands for propitiator, the act for the agent. The Elder thus follows in the line of venerable tradition (cp. Hebr. ix. 24-26). He even employs the figure of Christ's blood as a cleansing agency (i. 7); but of the method of its application he says nothing. The death of Jesus was not the centre of the fellowship with God conceived in terms of light and love as revealed in the Son. It was a historic incident of his earthly life in a kind of pre-established harmony implied in prophecy. Forensic ideas had already gathered about it; but the Elder's thought was not (like Paul's) imbued with them, and he only pays them a sort of distant respect.

The removal of the sins of the whole world could not, however, be effected all at once. It might be viewed as potentially complete in the divine purpose, but the actual conversion of children of the Devil into children of God was necessarily a slow process. By what means it was effected the Elder does not say, unless there be a hint of the believer's baptism in the joint witness of the 'water' with the Spirit and the blood (v. 8).[2] But the issue of birth 'out of God' is stated in the most explicit terms. It lifted the believer above all liability to sin. With a new nature the guilty past was cancelled; his sins were forgiven him, and temptation assailed him no more:

'Whosoever is begotten of God doeth no sin, because his seed abideth in him, and he cannot sin because he is begotten of God' (iii. 9).

'We know that whosoever is begotten of God sinneth not, but his begetting keepeth him and the Evil One toucheth him not (v. 18).'[3]

[1] Test. 'Levi,' iii. 5, with the important note of Dr. Charles.

[2] This is the usual reference on sacramentarian principles of interpretation. The objection—possibly exaggerated—is that the blood must then be understood of the Eucharist, which is not elsewhere known under that designation.

[3] Cp. the emendation of Harnack, following the Vulgate, 'sed generatio Dei conservat eum,' *Sitzungsberichte* of the Prussian Academy of Sciences, 1915, p. 541.

To his 'little children' the Elder could therefore write with confidence that their sins were forgiven. The Fathers knew him which was from the beginning; the young men were strong, the word of God dwelt in them, and they had overcome the Evil One (ii. 12-14). Yet even they needed the warning 'Love not the world.' It was the scene of the lust of the flesh, gross appetites of greediness, intemperance, unchastity, and all the base delights of cruelty and revenge; the lust of the eyes, which found satisfaction in public shows, idolatrous processions, the odious spectacles of the theatre, or perhaps aesthetic refinements and the cult of 'the beautiful'; the vain glory of life, all selfish pomp and display, the parade of wealth, pride in achievement and power. Did these things affect the brethren? They were not raised above all danger. The demands of brotherly charity were sometimes coldly dismissed; the needy believer found the springs of compassion in the prosperous closed against him (iii. 17). Lapses there might sometimes be; the Christian life was a life of endeavour, not of completed attainment. Though we are now children of God, said the Elder, we are not yet like the Son. For that we must wait till he is manifested, and we see him as he is. That hope produced an earnest self-discipline; those who shared it sought to purify themselves as he was pure. This was 'doing righteousness' or 'doing the truth,' a steady effort, a concentration of purpose. It was the opposite of 'doing sin,' the habit of unrestrained impulse, of irregular passion, which recognised no law. In the sharp divisions of the Elder's thought there were no cloudy regions between light and darkness; he saw but two kinds of men, those who had been quickened with the new life, and those who were still under the sway of death. The first might indeed sin, but it was not their constant practice, they did not 'do sin,' pass day by day in its atmosphere, repudiate the appeal of an inward monitor, and boast the right of self-indulgence. For their offences there was a remedy. To deny them was an act of self-deception which proved that the sinner had not after all 'the truth' in him. It even made God 'a liar' (i. 10); had not his

word borne testimony in the past to the universality of sin, did it not witness in the believer's heart to the imperishable distinction between good and evil? Confession —is it becoming an act of collective approach to God in church-worship, or already a part of penitential discipline, or is it the private acknowledgment of the conscience before the Faithful and Righteous One?—draws down forgiveness and its purifying power. The blood of Christ, however it be applied, still exerts its cleansing energy, and when the believer has once realised it, that transgression he will not repeat.

There is, accordingly, a sin that is not 'unto death,' and for a brother thus guilty it is lawful that prayer should be made. Behind it in the darkness is a sin unto death (v. 16). Its nature is not explained. Was it some grave criminal offence, adhesion to false teachers, apostasy from Christianity in consequence of the severity of its demands or the external dangers of persecution? We are not told; contemporary readers doubtless knew. For such guilt no intercession is enjoined, but neither is it forbidden. If ever the offender's heart should condemn him, was restoration possible? No ray shoots through the gloom to throw a light upon his fate. But the brethren whose sins are thus self-condemned, are not excluded from fellowship with 'the truth.' 'Hereby shall we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our heart before him, whereinsoever our heart condemn us' (iii. 19). How shall they know that they still belong to it? The explanation is obscure. 'Hereby' commonly refers to what follows, not to what precedes.[1] To seek the ground of the believer's confidence in the previous exhortation to love in deed instead of in word is not consonant with the writer's usage. The text is not free from suspicion of some corruption, and various corrections have been suggested. It is perhaps easiest to suppose that in adding clause to clause the writer forgot his 'hereby,' and in the glow of faith needed no further reason for his confidence in contemplating the majesty of God's omniscience. Conscious of guilt the offender will not deceive himself about his error; he will

[1] Cp. ii. 3, 5; iii. 16, 24; iv. 2, 13; v. 2.

be humbly ready to submit himself to God's rebuke; but he will trust that by such an act of unsparing veracity he may still be recognised as 'of the truth,' because God is greater than his heart, knows its sincerities as well as its falsities, and through the purging contact of his own righteousness restores the sinner in the fellowship broken by his sin.

IV

Such is the picture of the community of the 'children of God.' How far do these letters show it to be true to its own ideal? The world around is full of an obscure hatred. The Jews, portrayed in the Gospel with such bitterness, are out of sight. Their peculiar institutions, the law, circumcision, the sabbath, food regulations, are ignored. Only a hint of external danger from the civil magistrate and a warning against popular worship awake attention. Over against such peril the atmosphere of faith and love within is full of peace, disturbed, however, from time to time by hints of painful conflict. Travelling preachers went from place to place, proving the sincerity of their devotion to the Name by taking no gifts from Gentile converts. The Elder commends their services, and urges that they be received on their way with welcome. To the church of the beloved Gaius he had written to that effect. An ambitious leader, however, named Diotrephes, defied his authority, 'prating against us with wicked words' (III. 10), and not only refused himself to receive such missionaries but actually drove out those who did. It is an unpleasant glimpse into local strife between claimants to rule. There were clashing personalities and doctrinal struggles. Whether the 'antichrists' and their adherents went forth from the churches of their own accord, or were expelled (ii. 18, 19), is not clear. The process of 'proving the spirits' (iv. 1) may often have involved some vehemence of struggle. In any case the Elect Lady is warned to receive no one who has not both the Father and the Son (II. 10). Even to salute such a teacher is to share in his evil works. With those who say

that they have no sin, or profess to know Christ yet do not keep his commandments, there can be no brotherhood. The stern word 'liar' is flung against them as Jesus had thrown it against the Jews (John viii. 55). The care of the Churches, such as the Elder exercised, was not without its provocations and bitterness. Yet these oppositions tested the strength, nourished the vigour, and promoted the cohesion of the scattered groups. Indifference and languor were summoned to meet great issues, and the call was nobly met.

To those who were 'doing the truth' within the churches there was no need to speak of their worship or their institutions. Of the development of a hierarchy there is no word. The movement towards ecclesiastical organisation revealed in the letters of Ignatius does not affect the Elder's exalted delineations of the believer's abode in God, and God's gracious presence in him. To keep the commandments is the foundation of all spiritual attainment. Obedience is the ground of knowledge; to tread the path of righteousness is the proof of love to God. The commandments are sometimes referred to Christ (ii. 3), sometimes to God (iii. 22), and they are sometimes summed up in one which is both old and new (ii. 7, 8), 'that we should love one another' (iii. 11).[1] It was old because it belonged to the tradition 'from the beginning'; it was new in virtue of its enunciation by Jesus (John xiii. 34) and the emphasis given to it by his life and death, as well as of its effective influence on the hearts of the faithful. The Gentile world had seen nothing like it. If there was any danger that it might become only a phrase upon the tongue (iii. 18), the self-sacrifice of Christ should teach them the fulness of its meaning.

In this sphere of purity and knowledge, of trust and love, the believer lived with an ineffable security. What mattered the storms without, when there was a consecrated peace within? The heart which was undisturbed by self-reproach felt a quiet confidence in prayer (iii. 21, 22;

[1] So Jesus observes God's commandments (John xv. 10), or commandment (x. 18; xii. 50; viii. 55). Cp. 'words' and 'word' (*logos*), (xiv. 23, 24).

v. 14, 15). Whatever help the believer needed would be granted him. When, like Jesus, he did the things that were pleasing in God's sight (iii. 22; John viii. 29), he had but to ask and he would receive; had not the Teacher promised the disciples that so their joy should be fulfilled (xvi. 24)? Well might the Elder turn from warnings against the danger of new teachings, contrary to what had been heard from the beginning, to the great hope soon to be realised: 'And now, little children, abide in him, that, if he shall be manifested, we may have boldness, and not be ashamed before him at his coming' (ii. 28). Still did the Church cherish the expectation of the return of Christ, descending from the sky. It had been the theme of apostolic preaching; it had been placed on the lips of Jesus himself (Matt. xxiv. 3, 27, 37, 39). His appearance would inaugurate the judgment (iv. 17), but those who had been made perfect in love would await it without fear. The confessors of the Son had in a measure realised the fellowship which united him with the Father, 'as he is, even so are we in this world.' They knew that he was righteous, and that knowledge carried with it the further knowledge that all doers of righteousness were begotten of him (ii. 29).[1] So the Elder rests in the supreme conviction, 'Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the children of God, and we are!' In such words lies the promise and potency of immortality. Those whom God loves will he not love for ever? Is not this the secret of Johannine Christianity—whatever may be its dogmatic significance—that through the changes of time, our sorrows, our struggles, our defeats, it opens a way to that vision which in its nature is eternal life?

[1] Some critics (Loisy among the latest) interpret the *parousia* as a manifestation of God, not of Christ. This would bring the language of 29 into general harmony with the doctrine of birth 'out of God.' Nowhere else is such 'begetting' ascribed to Jesus. But the reference to the past manifestation (iii. 5) surely identifies the Person with the Son. The words of Justin (*Dial.* cxxiii.), 'Christ who begat us unto God' so that the Christians who keep the commandments 'are called and are the children of God,' seem an echo of similar language.

INDEX TO SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

GENESIS

	PAGE
i. - - -	291
ii. 7 - -	361
iii. 8 - -	291
xxiv. 13, 20 -	379

EXODUS

ii. 16, 19 - -	379
iv. 22 - -	347
xii. 22, 23 -	407
xii. 46 - -	373
xv. - - -	149
xvi. - 426,	435
xvi. 33 f. -	87
xxiv. 10 - -	330
xxv. 31 ff. -	66
xxv. 40 - 172,	273
xxviii. 38 -	408
xxix. 45 - -	327
xxxiii. 18, 22 -	328
xxxiv. 6 - -	329
xl. 34 - -	327

LEVITICUS

xxv. 9 - -	466

NUMBERS

xii. 8 - -	330
xxi. 9 - -	398

DEUTERONOMY

ii. 14 - -	245
iv. 12 - -	330
viii. 3 - -	436
xiv. 1 - -	302
xviii. 12 - -	72
xviii. 15 - 237,	348
xxxii. 11 - -	123
xxxii. 39 - -	64

JUDGES

	PAGE
v. - - -	151
v. 31 - -	71
vi. 34 - -	364
xi. 34 - -	332

1 SAMUEL

xv. 25 - -	408
xxv. 28 - -	408
xxv. 41 - -	391

2 SAMUEL

ii. 6 - -	276
vii. 14 - -	347

2 KINGS

iv. 42-44 - -	422
v. 7 - -	444
xvii. 24, 31 -	245

1 CHRONICLES

xii. 18 - -	364

2 CHRONICLES

xxiv. 20 - -	364

JOB

xii. 13 - -	295
xlii. 5 - -	330

PSALMS

	PAGE
ii. - - -	87
ii. 1, 2 - -	116
ii. 7 - 347,	363
ii. 9 - -	75
viii. 4 - -	365
xvi. 11 - -	9
xvii. 15 - -	9
xix. 12 - -	12
xxix. - -	113
xxxiii. 6 - -	290
xxxv. 9 - -	317
xli. 10 - -	428
xliii. 3 - -	317
xlix. 15 - -	9
lxxiii. 24 - -	9
lxxxii. 6 - -	418
lxxxix. 26, 27 -	347
lxxxix. 27 -	68
lxxxix. 37 -	68
xciii. ff. - -	116
xcvi. 10-13 -	8
xcvii. 1 - -	161
xcix. 1 - -	116
civ. - 12,	404
cxviii. 24 -	161
cxxx. 4 - -	466
cxxxix. 8 -	9
cxlix. 6 - -	71

PROVERBS

i. 24 - -	321
viii. 12, 293,	404
viii. 22 - 75,	294
ix. 1 ff. - -	293
ix. 5 - -	426
ix. 13-18 - -	293

ECCLESIASTES

iii. 1 - -	90

ISAIAH

i. 10 - -	115
ii. 2 - 141,	180
xi. 1, 2 - -	95
xi. 2 - 67,	342
xiii. 9, 10 -	8

Isaiah (*cont.*) page
xiv. 13 - - 179
xxi. 9 - - 145
xxiii. 17 - - 153
xxiv.-xxvii. - 9
xxiv. 21, 22 - 168
xxiv. 21-23 - 10
xxiv. 23 - - 97
xxvi. 19 - - 10
xxxi. 3 - 342, 361
xxxv. 5, 6 - 206
xl. 13 - - 342
xlii. 6 - - 355
xliii. 10 - 352, 451
xliv. 6 - - 71
xlv. 1 - - 8
xlix. 2 - - 71
l. 11 - - 79
lii. 7 - - 161
liii. 7 - 101, 407
liii. 9 - - 142
liii. 12 - - 408
liv. 11, 12 - 181
liv. 13 - - 426
lv. 1 - - 426
lx. - - - 182
lxi. 1 - 342, 363
lxii. 6 - - 180
lxiii. 1-3 - - 164
lxiii. 9 - - 36
lxv. 16 - - 75

Jeremiah
iii. 4 - - 301
ix. 24 - - 450
xv. 2 - - 133
xxii. 16 - - 450
xxv. 5 - - 144
xxv. 15-31 - 7
xxxi. 31-34
410, 436, 450
xliii. 11 - - 132
li. 13 - - 153

Ezekiel
i. - - - 93
i. 13 - - 95
i. 24 - - 71
ii. 8-iii. 3 - 113
ix. 4 - - 110
x. 1 - - 95
xiv. 12-21 - 107
xxviii. 14 - 179
xxxvii. 27 - 326
xxxix. 17-20 - 166
xl. 2 - - 180

page
xliii. 2 - - 371
xliii. 7 - - 327
xlvii. - - 182
xlvii. 2 - - 247

Daniel
ii. 28, 29 - - 89
iv. 17 - - 66
v. 19 - - 132
vii. - - - 14
vii. 2 - - 128
vii. 8 - - 131
vii. 9 - - 71
vii. 10 - - 132
vii. 13 - 69, 147
vii. 25 17, 29, 114
vii. 27 - 15, 171
viii. 10 - - 127
viii. 26 - - 183
ix. 25 27 - - 59
x. 9 - - 71
xi. 27 - - 91
xi. 36 - - 131
xii. 1 - - 132
xii. 2 - - 18
xii. 4 - - 91
xii. 5 - - 114
xii. 7 - 29, 113
xii. 9 - - 183

Hosea
ii. 19, 20 - - 161
iv. 12 - - 450

Joel
iii. 13 - - 147

Amos
i. 3-ii. 8 - - 7
v. 18-20 - - 7

Nahum
iii. 4 - - 153

Zephaniah
i. 7-18 - - 7

Zechariah
iv. 10 - - 66
iv. 11-14 - - 115
vi. - - - 106
ix. 9, 10 - - 348

page
xii. 10 - 69, 461
xiv. 8 - - 182
xiv. 11 - - 183

4 Ezra
iv. - - - 155
iv. 26 - - 57
iv. 30 - - 58
iv. 33-36 - - 56
iv. 36, 37 91, 109
v. 33 - - 57
vi. 5 - - 110
vi. 38 - - 290
vi. 49 - - 135
vii. 26 - - 173
vii. 28
20, 56, 58, 171
vii. 42 - - 181
vii. 70 - - 90
vii. 77 - - 146
vii. 90-93 - 145
vii. 123 - - 183
viii. 1, 3, 4 - 57
viii. 52 - 59, 173
viii. 55 - - 57
ix. 7 - - 59
x. 15, 16, 49, 50 57
xi. 40-42 - - 58
xii. 34 - - 171
xii. 36 - - 173
xiii. 3 - - 60
xiii. 25-38 - 165
xiii. 35 - 58, 141
xiv. 10 - - 57
xiv. 11 - - 55

Tobit
iii. 15 - - 332
xi. 19 - - 377
xii. 15 - 66, 112
xiii. 16, 17 - 181
xiv. 6, 7 - - 21

Rest of Esther
x. 11 - - 91

Wisdom of Solomon
i. 7 ff. - - 395
ii. 18 - - 350
ii. 24 - 167, 337
vii. 22-viii. 1 - 295
vii. 22 - - 332
vii. 27 - - 322

PAGE

ix. 1, 2 - - 295
ix. 16 - - 272
xiii. 2 - - 51
xviii. 13 - - 347
xviii. 15 - - 165

ECCLESIASTICUS

i. 4, 9 - - 294
xxiv. 3 ff - 294
xxiv. 21 - - 425
xlii. 15-xliii. - 12
xlii. 15 - - 290
xliii. 31 - - 330
li. 23 ff - - 232

MATTHEW

iii. 2 - - 17
iii. 7 - - 229
iii. 17 - - 265
iv. 8 - - 17
iv. 17 - - 17
v. 1 - - 421
v. 12 - - 161
v. 14 - - 355
v. 16 - - 425
v. 44 - - 396
vii. 15 - - 38
viii. 5 - - 381
x. 5 - - 385
x. 32 - - 87
x. 39 - - 386
x. 40 - - 386
xi. 25-27 - 231
xi. 27 - - 353
xi. 28-30 - - 232
xii. 1 - - 232
xii. 15 - - 422
xii. 24, 34 - 361
xii. 26, 28 17, 129
xii. 27-29 - 39
xii. 28 - - 383
xii. 32 - - 17
xii. 38, 39 - 381
xiii. 18, 19 - 410
xiii. 39, 49 - 116
xiii. 43 - - 71
xiv. 13, 14 - 421
xv. 14 - - 448
xv. 29 - - 421
xv. 31 - - 399
xv. 36 - - 422
xvi. 16 - - 347
xvi. 18, 19 - 239
xvi. 19 - - 72

PAGE

xvi. 25 - - 386
xvi. 27, 28 - 249
xvii. 12, 13 - 236
xviii. 3 - - 411
xviii. 10 - - 16
xviii. 20 - - 393
xix. 17 - - 47
xix. 18 - - 171
xix. 28 - 97, 409
xxii. 1-13 - 162
xxiii. 1, 2 - 388
xxiii. 3 - - 266
xxiii. 8 - - 386
xxiii. 16, 24 - 448
xxiii. 34 - - 334
xxiii. 34-36 - 233
xxiv. - - 105
xxiv. 1 - - 386
xxiv. 3 - 116, 439
xxiv. 3, 27, 37, 39 472
xxiv. 3, 34, 35 57
xxiv. 24 - - 381
xxiv. 30 - - 69
xxiv. 43 - - 76
xxv. - 19, 348
xxv. 31 - - 442
xxvi. 11 - - 222
xxvii. 50 - 361, 393
xxviii. 18 - 234
xxviii. 19 - 247

MARK

i. 10 101, 337, 363
i. 10, 11 - - 91
i. 14 - - 239
i. 24 - - 436
ii. 9, 11, 12 - 406
ii. 11 - 260, 382
ii. 12 - - 399
ii. 22 - - 409
ii. 28 - - 365
iii. 16 - - 239
iii. 21 - - 261
vi. 3 - - 426
vi. 12 - - 45
vi. 32, 33 - 420
vi. 32, 45 - 423
vi. 34 - - 421
vi. 37 - - 422
vi. 43 - - 422
vi. 44, 48 - 260
vi. 46 - - 340
vii. 23 - - 382
vii. 25-30 - 381

PAGE

viii. 6 - - 422
viii. 11, 12 - 381
viii. 23 - - 382
viii. 29 - 347, 436
viii. 31 - 398, 425
viii. 34 - - 386
viii. 35 - - 386
viii. 35-37 - 361
viii. 38 - - 438
ix. 1 - 249, 438
ix. 13 - - 236
ix. 31 - - 398
ix. 37 - - 386
x. 17 - - 387
x. 24 - - 386
x. 33, 34 - - 398
xi. 1 - - 369
xi. 22 - - 342
xii. 37 - - 261
xiii. 17, 28, 105
xiii. 1-8 - - 334
xiii. 7 - - 36
xiii. 7, 10 - 91
xiii. 8 - 126, 439
xiii. 9 - - 32
xiii. 14 - - 39
xiii. 22 - 381, 460
xiii. 26, 30, 31 428
xiii. 32 - - 234
xiv. 2 - - 374
xiv. 3 - 230, 369
xiv. 12 - - 407
xiv. 24, 25 - 409
xiv. 42 - - 223
xiv. 49 - - 229
xiv. 55-57, 59 - 259
xiv. 58 - - 369
xiv. 61 - - 346
xiv. 62 - - 438
xv. 37 - 363, 393
xv. 38, 39 - 461
xvi. 7 - - 248

LUKE

i. 35 - - 364
i. 47 - - 232
i. 67 - - 39
ii. 38 - - 232
iii. 15 - - 236
iii. 22 - - 265
iii. 23 - - 370
iv. 13 - - 126
v. 30 - - 426
vi. 14 - - 239
vi. 20 - - 422

LUKE (*cont.*) PAGE

vi. 21 - - 425
vi. 39 - - 448
vii. 2-10 - - 260
vii. 16 - - 399
vii. 19 - - 238
vii. 21 - - 232
vii. 37-50 369, 374
vii. 38 - - 230
ix. 20 - 223, 347
ix. 24 - - 386
x. - - - 231
x. 18 - - 39
x. 21, 22 - - 231
x. 36, 37 - - 396
xi. 20 - - 383
xi. 49 - - 233
xi. 49-51 - - 334
xii. 8 - - 87
xii. 37, xxii. 27 391
xii. 39 - - 76
xiii. 19 - - 399
xiii. 33 - - 91
xv. 2 - - 426
xvii. 15 - - 399
xvii. 33 - - 386
xviii. 30 - - 437
xix. 7 - - 426
xxi. - - 105
xxii. 3 - - 359
xxii. 8 - - 372
xxii. 28 - - 126
xxii. 29, 30 - 347
xxii. 30 - 97, 171
xxii. 51 - - 220
xxii. 70 - - 346
xxii. 71 - - 259
xxiii. 46 84, 363, 393
xxiii. 47 - - 399
xxiv. 26 - - 397
xxiv. 34 - - 231
xxiv. 37 - - 342
xxiv. 47 - - 386

JOHN

i. 1 - 48, 165, 295, 313, 342
i. 4, 5 - 319, 321
i. 6 - - - 352
i. 6-8 - - 333
i. 6-8, 15 - - 313
i. 7, 19 - - 260
i. 12, 13 - - 412
i. 12-14 - 313, 334
i. 13 - - 322

PAGE

i. 14 36, 325, 327
i. 14, 16 - 225, 329
i. 15, 24, 28 - 222
i. 16, 17 - - 446
i. 17 - - 329
i. 18 331, 343, 448
i. 19, 24 - 229, 238
i. 19-34 - - 236
i. 21 - - 348
i. 21, vi. 14, vii. 40 237
i. 22, 36 - - 406
i. 26 - - 377
i. 27 - - 422
i. 28 - - 238
i. 28, 44 - - 369
i. 29 256, 373, 466
i. 29, 35, 43 - 369
i. 31, 33 - - 237
i. 31-33, 29, 36 238
i. 32 238, 337, 364
i. 32 f., 39 f. - 250
i. 33 - - 393
i. 34 - - 260
i. 36 - 101, 239
i. 41, 49 - - 385
i. 42 - - 354
i. 43 - - 423
i. 45 - 346, 361
i. 49-51 - - 347
i. 51 - 348, 365
ii.-xii. - - 256
ii. 1, 12, 13 - 369
ii. 11 328, 399
ii. 13 - - 368
ii. 16 - - 406
ii. 17 - - 344
ii. 17, 21, 22 - 222
ii. 17, 22 - - 369
ii. 20 - - 370
ii. 21 - - 266
ii. 21, 22 - - 221
ii. 23 386, 410, 446
ii. 25 - - 354
ii. 28 - - 459
iii. 1 - - 410
iii. 2 - - 386
iii. 3, 31, xix. 11 411
iii. 3 - - 441
iii. 3-5 - - 45
iii. 3-9 - - 366
iii. 4 - - 427
iii. 4, 9, v. 44, vi. 52, ix. 16 - - 411
iii. 5 - - 411

PAGE

iii. 8 - 206, 435
iii. 11 225, 382, 445
iii. 11, 13 - 389
iii. 12 - 341, 343
iii. 12, 13 - 349
iii. 13 - 366, 424
iii. 14 348, 354, 366, 398
iii. 14, ix. 4, x. 16, xii. 34, xx. 9 411
iii. 14, 15 - 406
iii. 16 - - 445
iii. 16, 17 - 353
iii. 16-18 - - 442
iii. 16-21 - - 386
iii. 17 - - 348
iii. 17, 35, 36 - 224
iii. 19 - - 355
iii. 19-21 - - 46
iii. 21, 22 - 471
iii. 22 369, 417, 420
iii. 23 - - 369
iii. 24 - - 222
iii. 27 - - 390
iii. 31 - - 352
iii. 34 335, 337, 364, 436
iii. 35 - - 353
iii. 36 348, 392, 402, 443, 446, 454
iv. 1 - 270, 423
iv. 2 - - 417
iv. 2, 8 - - 222
iv. 5 - - 369
iv. 7, 15 - - 379
iv. 9 - - 221
iv. 10, 14 - 206
iv. 15 - 417, 425
iv. 18 - - 245
iv. 22 - - 339
iv. 24 - - 342
iv. 31 - - 386
iv. 32, 34 - 424
iv. 38 - 231, 385
iv. 39 - - 334
iv. 42 - 191, 402
iv. 43-54 - - 222
iv. 46 - - 369
iv. 46-54 - - 381
iv. 48 - - 381
iv. 54 - 222, 420
v. - - - 222
v. 1 - 368, 420
v. 5 - - 245
v. 8 - 260, 382

PAGE

v. 8, 9, Mk. ii. 11, 12 - - 228
v. 8-12 - - 406
v. 9 - - 344
v. 17 - 344, 382
v. 18 - 222, 352
v. 18, 33, 37, 39, 46 - - 260
v. 19, 20 - - 449
v. 19-23 - - 340
v. 19-26 - - 444
v. 19-29 - - 224
v. 20 - - 355
v. 21 - - 343
v. 22 - - 402
v. 23 - - 356
v. 24 334, 426, 444, 446
v. 26 343, 352, 424, 444, 446
v. 27 348, 353, 365, 402, 442, 445
v. 28, 29 - 442, 445
v. 30 - - 343
v. 30, vi. 38 - 444
v. 31 - - 259
v. 31, 32 - - 458
v. 31, viii. 13 - 387
v. 32, 37 - - 387
v. 33 - - 387
v. 35 - - 355
v. 36 - - 383
v. 36, 37, 38 - 224
v. 37 - - 343
v. 38 - 334, 447
v. 39, 46 - - 387
v. 43 - 207, 454
v. 47 222 f., 335, 420
vi. - 222 f., 420
vi. 1 - 220, 420
vi. 3, 21 - - 248
vi. 4 222, 368, 420
vi. 6 - - 383
vi. 9 - - 422
vi. 11 - - 422
vi. 14 - - 425
vi. 15 - - 348
vi. 16, 71 - 421
vi. 17 - 420, 423
vi. 21 - 352, 382
vi. 22 - - 420
vi. 22, 23 - 270
vi. 23 - - 423
vi. 24 - - 421
vi. 25 - 386, 426

PAGE

vi. 27 - - 353
vi. 27, 36 - 335
vi. 27 ff. - - 425
vi. 27-59 - - 419
vi. 28, 29 - 444
vi. 29 - - 390
vi. 29, 57 224, 353
vi. 30, 26 - 426
vi. 32 - - 428
vi. 32-50 - - 428
vi. 33 - - 453
vi. 34 - - 418
vi. 36, 39*b*, 40, 44*b* 222
vi. 38 - - 352
vi. 38, 39, 44 224, 353
vi. 39, 40, 44, 54 441
vi. 40 - 224, 448
vi. 40, 44, 54 - 426
vi. 41, 52 421, 426
vi. 42 - - 361
vi. 43, 61 - 426
vi. 44 - 390, 419
vi. 44, 39 - 426
vi. 44, 45 - 444
vi. 46 - - 343
vi. 47 - - 428
vi. 51 - - 434
vi. 51-58 - - 428
vi. 53 - 349, 444
vi. 55 - - 428
vi. 56 - - 428
vi. 56-58 - - 427
vi. 57 - - 352
vi. 59 - - 426
vi. 62 - 366, 344
vi. 63 345, 349, 418
vi. 63, 68 335, 449
vi. 65 - - 390
vi. 67, 70, 71, xx. 24 227, 240
vi. 68, 69 - 223
vi. 69 - 436, 447
vi. 70, 71 - 354
vii. - - - 421
vii. 1 - 258, 420
vii. 2 - 222, 368
vii. 6, 8 - - 378
vii. 15, 21, 23 -222 f.
vii. 18 - - 387
vii. 21 - - 369
vii. 23 - - 257
vii. 26-29 - 448
vii. 28 - - 387
vii. 30 - - 387

PAGE

vii. 30, 32, 44 - 225
vii. 31 - - 446
vii. 32, 45 - 259
vii. 32 - - 426
vii. 38 - - 258
vii. 39 222, 393, 399
vii. 40 - - 348
vii. 50 - - 410
vii. 53-viii. 11 25, 219
viii. - - 421
viii. 12 - - 355
viii. 13, 17 - 259
viii. 13, ix. 40 - 258
viii. 14 - - 206
viii. 14, 23 - 262
viii. 20 - - 378
viii. 21 - - 267
viii. 21, 24 - 406
viii. 24, 28 - 451
viii. 26 234, 344, 393
viii. 28 - 348, 354, 365, 399
viii. 28, 29 - 399
viii. 29 386, 444, 472
viii. 30 - - 446
viii. 31 261, 395, 428
viii. 31, 35 - 335
viii. 31-36 - 406
viii. 32-36 284, 404
viii. 34, 35 386, 395
viii. 34-36 - 407
viii. 36 - - 224
viii. 40 - - 360
viii. 42 - - 352
viii. 43 - 328, 390
viii. 43, 44 - 262
viii. 43-47 337, 427
viii. 44, 45 - 387, 403, 446
viii. 46 - - 394
viii. 48 - - 261
viii. 51 - - 334
viii. 51, 52, 55 47
viii. 52 - - 345
viii. 55 - 334, 471
viii. 56 - - 260
viii. 57 - - 370
viii. 58 44, 266, 352
viii. 59 - 223, 406
viii. 59, xii. 36 352
ix. 2 - 386, 257
ix. 3 - - 382
ix. 4 - - 389
ix. 22 - - 394

JOHN (*cont.*) PAGE
ix. 24 - - 394
ix. 35 - - 365
ix. 39 46, 391, 402, 443
ix. 40, 41 - 389
ix. 41 - - 443
x. 1-18 - - 389
x. 6 - 222, 388
x. 8 - 262, 388
x. 10 - 387, 401, 437, 445
x. 11, 15 - - - 362
x. 14 - - 235
x. 15 - 354, 449
x. 16 - 268, 283
x. 17 - - 405
x. 17, 18 - - 391
x. 17, xiii. 4, 12 405
x. 18 - 47, 405, 406, 471
x. 22 - - 368
x. 25 - - 383
x. 28 - - 445
x. 28, 29 - - 406
x. 30 356, 449, 453
x. 34 - - 259
x. 35 - - 257
x. 38 - 383, 448
x. 39 - - 352
xi. 1, 5, 19, 39 230
xi. 2 - 270, 423
xi. 2, 18 - - 222
xi. 2, 37 - - 369
xi. 4 - 383, 399
xi. 8 - - 386
xi. 12, 14 - 344
xi. 24-26 - - 427
xi. 26-27 - 336
xi. 27 - - 422
xi. 33 - - 363
xi. 39 - - 406
xi. 41 - - 422
xi. 47, 57 - 259
xi. 48 - - 228
xi. 51 - 267, 454
xi. 51, 52 - 401
xi. 53 - - 283
xii. 1, 12 - - 369
xii. 2, Lk. x. 14 230
xii. 6, 33 - - 222
xii. 8 - - 221
xii. 13-15 - 348
xii. 14, 15, Mt. xxi. 4, 5 - - 229
xii. 16 - 369, 399
xii. 17, 42 - 369
xii. 20 ff. - 268
xii. 20-36 - 222
xii. 23, 27 - 378
xii. 23 - - 399
xii. 23, 34 348, 365
xii. 23-36 - 400
xii. 24, 34, 46 - 335
xii. 25, Mk. viii. 35 229
xii. 25, 26 - 386
xii. 26, Mk. viii. 34, x. 45, Lk. xxii. 27 - - 229
xii. 27 - - 362
xii. 31 337, 359, 405
xii. 31, 32 - 399
xii. 32 - 419, 454
xii. 34 - 399, 424
xii. 36 - - 223
xii. 38 - 229, 257, 397, 408
xii. 41 - - 260
xii. 44 - 424, 444
xii. 44-50 - 223
xii. 45 - - 448
xii. 47 46, 348, 402
xii. 47, 48 - 436
xii. 48 - - 442
xii. 48, 49 - 334
xii. 49 - - 334
xii. 50 - - 471
xiii.-xvii. - 256
xiii. 1 - 368, 378
xiii. 2, 27 359, 391
xiii. 3 - - 353
xiii. 10 - - 418
xiii. 11, 34 f. - 222
xiii. 13 334, 386, 423
xiii. 16, xv. 16, xvii. 18 - - 227
xiii. 16, xv. 20 386
xiii. 16, xv. 20, Mt. x. 24 - - 229
xiii. 18 229, 257, 428
xiii. 20 - 224, 386
xiii. 21 - - 363
xiii. 31 - 348, 391
xiii. 33 - - 369
xiii. 34 - - 471
xiii. 36 - 249, 392
xiii. 36-38 - 222
xiv. 1 - 336, 444
xiv. 3 - - 439
xiv. 5 - - 392
xiv. 6 - 354, 402
xiv. 7, 8 - - 392
xiv. 9 - 343, 356
xiv. 10 - 343, 354, 355, 436
xiv. 10, 11 - 392
xiv. 10, 17 - 335
xiv. 11 336, 344, 384
xiv. 12 424, 446, 449
xiv. 13 - - 224
xiv. 15 - - 266
xiv. 15, 21, 23, 24 47
xiv. 16 - 394, 459
xiv. 16, 17, 26 392
xiv. 17 390, 393, 394
xiv. 17, xvi. 13 441
xiv. 18 - - 438
xiv. 19 - - 445
xiv. 20 - - 394
xiv. 22 - - 441
xiv. 23 - 284, 335, 439, 459
xiv. 23, 24 - 471
xiv. 24 - 224, 334
xiv. 26 - - 393
xiv. 28 - 356, 396, 438
xiv. 30, 31 - 223
xiv. 31 - 356, 391
xv.-xvi. - 223, 391
xv. 2 - - 406
xv. 3 334, 346, 418
xv. 4-7, 9, 10, 16 336
xv. 5 - 393, 428
xv. 6 - - 392
xv. 7 - 335, 430
xv. 7, 10 - - 396
xv. 8 - - 456
xv. 10 - - 471
xv. 10, 11 - 353
xv. 10, 20 - 47
xv. 11 396, 417, 449
xv. 12, 13 - 396
xv. 13 - - 362
xv. 13, 14 - 405
xv. 15 - 354, 439
xv. 16 - - 392
xv. 18 - 356, 394
xv. 18, 19 - 255
xv. 20 - - 369
xv. 21 - - 224
xv. 22-24 - 443
xv. 25 - 229, 397
xv. 26 - - 261
xv. 27 - - 260

PAGE
xvi. 2 - 461, 394
xvi. 5 - 224, 392
xvi. 7 - - 394
xvi. 7-11 - - 392
xvi. 8 - - 443
xvi. 8-11 - 340, 394
xvi. 11 - - 405
xvi. 13 - 393, 448
xvi. 13-15 - 326
xvi. 16, 22 - 438
xvi. 21 - - 439
xvi. 22 - - 406
xvi. 24 - 417, 472
xvi. 25 - - 392
xvi. 25, 29 - 388
xvi. 30 - 355, 448
xvi. 32 - 399, 448
xvi. 33 47, 224, 261
xvii. - 223, 224
xvii. 1 224, 378, 422
xvii. 1-5 - - 400
xvii. 3 - 387, 464
xvii. 3, 18, 21, 23, 25 - - 224
xvii. 4 - 353, 424
xvii. 5 - 284, 352
xvii. 5, 24 - 328
xvii. 6 - - 47
xvii. 8 436, 448, 449
xvii. 9 - - 454
xvii. 9-11 - 390
xvii. 12 - 229, 257, 397, 426, 444
xvii. 13 - 353, 417
xvii. 14 - - 255
xvii. 15 - - 406
xvii. 15-24 - 420
xvii. 17 - 334, 354
xvii. 18 - 364, 449
xvii. 19 - - 436
xvii. 20 - 334, 419
xvii. 20, 21 - 440
xvii. 21 356, 449, 453
xvii. 21-23 - 394
xviii. 3 - - 259
xviii. 5, 9, 32 - 222
xviii. 9, 32 - 397
xviii. 10 - 220, 449
xviii. 12-27 - 224
xviii. 17, 18 - 222
xviii. 18 - - 375
xviii. 25 - - 375
xviii. 28 - 257, 372
xviii. 32 - - 397
xviii. 37 - 67, 401

PAGE
xix. 14 - - 373
xix. 15, 38 - 406
xix. 24, 36 - 229
xix. 24, 28, 36 f. 257, 397
xix. 30 - 353, 363, 373, 393, 400
xix. 33, 36 - 461
xix. 34, 35 436, 461
xix. 35 - 222, 428
xix. 36 - 373, 407
xix. 37 47, 69, 461
xix. 39 - - 410
xx. 1, 2, 13 - 406
xx. 3-10 - - 368
xx. 14, 16 - 238
xx. 17 - - 366
xx. 17, 19 - 231
xx. 19, 26 - 438
xx. 20*a* - - 222
xx. 21 224, 353, 439
xx. 22 - - 404
xx. 28 - - 270
xx. 30 - - 231
xx. 30, 31 220, 460
xx. 31 - 191, 335, 437, 446, 461
xxi. 25, 220, 222, 230, 246
xxi. 1 - - 393
xxi. 2, 7 - - 240
xxi. 10, 12, 14 248
xxi. 22, 23 - 249
xxi. 24 220, 227, 461
xxi. 25 - - 231

ACTS
i. 9 - - - 115
i. 24 - - 354
ii. 33 - - 399
ii. 38 - - 386
iii. 13 - - 351
iii. 13, 26 - 434
iii. 14 - - 436
iii. 22 - 237, 348
iv. 24 - - 98
v. 20 - - 462
vii. 37 - - 348
vii. 53 - - 36
vii. 59 - - 363
viii. 5 - - 385
viii. 9 - - 245
viii. 10 - - 350
viii. 12, 14-17 - 410
viii. 31 - - 448

PAGE
ix. 31 - - 83
x. 3 - - 386
x. 44-47 - - 410
xi. 27-30 - - 37
xii. 2 - - 212
xii. 16 - - 16
xiii. 26 - - 462
xiv. 15 - - 98
xv. 8 - - 354
xvii. 24 - - 233
xvii. 31 - - 441
xix. 10 - - 63
xix. 19 - - 101
xx. 29 - - 389
xxi. 8, 9 - - 38
xxii. 16 - - 416
xxii. 21 - - 283

ROMANS
i. 3 - - - 269
i. 4 - - - 340
i. 18-32 - - 20
ii. 7 - - 177
ii. 16 - 20, 441
ii. 19 - - 448
vi. 3-9 - - 417
vi. 16 - - 395
vi. 16-23 - - 407
vii. - - - 404
vii. 3 - - 428
vii. 7 - - 443
vii. 25 - - 361
viii. 3 - 269, 340, 352, 401
viii. 11 - - 417
viii. 13 - 270, 417
viii. 14 - - 340
viii. 24 - - 441
viii. 34 - - 467
viii. 38 - - 16
viii. 38, 39 - 346
viii. 39 - - 282
x. 14 - - 419
x. 16 - - 408
xii. 1 - - 69
xii. 6, 7 - - 38
xiv. 10 - 20, 441
xv. 19 - - 381
xv. 19, 28 - 419
xvi. 7 - - 41

1 CORINTHIANS
i. 14-17 - - 416
i. 17 - - 419

1 Corinthians (*cont.*)

	PAGE
i. 19	233
i. 24, 30	296
ii. 7	233
ii. 8	282
ii. 11	361
iv. 8	69, 171
iv. 15	416
v. 7	373
v. 10	441
vi. 2	171
vi. 2, 3	69
vi. 19	371
vi. 20	407
vii. 23	407
viii.	78
viii. 6	269
ix. 13	429
x. 3	421
x. 16-21	429
x. 21	433
x. 25	78
xi. 2, 23	234
xi. 5	38
xii. 4	284
xii. 13	416
xii. 28	38
xv. 3	234, 397
xv. 5	231
xv. 7	269
xv. 22 ff.	21
xv. 23	439
xv. 24	17, 282
xv. 24, 28	233
xv. 28	340
xv. 51	282
xvi. 19	63

2 Corinthians

iii. 17	416, 432
iii. 17, 18	67
iii. 18	393
iv. 4	129
iv. 18	298
v. 10	20, 177, 442
vi. 16	371
vi. 18	43, 54
xi. 2	125, 184
xi. 13	77
xii. 2-4	16
xii. 12	381

Galatians

iii. 13	399
iii. 13, 14	401
iii. 19	36
iii. 26	453
iii. 29	90
iv. 1-7	395
iv. 4	283, 340, 401
iv. 9	282
iv. 26	173
v. 1	395

Ephesians

i. 4	125
i. 21	16
ii. 2	17
ii. 6	417
ii. 20	38, 180
iii. 5	38
iii. 9	233
iii. 17	276
iii. 18	181
iv. 9	366
iv. 11	38
vi. 2	282

Philippians

ii. 6	284
ii. 9 ff.	269
ii. 11	399
iii. 12	318
iii. 21	87
iv. 11	282

Colossians

i. 13-15	347
i. 15	269, 284
i. 15, 18	75
i. 16	16, 97
i. 18	68
i. 19	329
i. 26	233
ii. 9	329
ii. 13	417
iii. 1, 3	417
iii. 5	417

1 Thessalonians

i. 3	76
i. 9	341, 464
i. 10	164, 402
iv. 15-v. 3	37
iv. 15	249
iv. 17	18, 439
v. 2	76
v. 20	38

2 Thessalonians

i. 7, 8	20
ii. 1-12	37
ii. 15	234
iii. 6	234

1 Timothy

v. 14	17

2 Timothy

ii. 12	69, 171

Titus

iii. 29	417

Hebrews

i. 3	302
ii. 4	381
vi. 4-6	84, 410
vi. 12	90
ix. 4	87
ix. 24-26	467
x. 32	84
x. 34	32, 84
xi. 13	90
xii. 3, 4	33
xii. 4	84
xii. 22	67, 173
xii. 23	125
xiii. 3	33, 84
xiii. 19	84

1 Peter

i. 2	84
ii. 14	84
iii. 9, 16	84
iii. 22	16
iv. 12, 15, 19	33
iv. 12-16	84
iv. 14	84
iv. 19	84
v. 8	17

2 Peter

ii. 4	16
iii. 3-13	18

1 John

i. 1-3	225
i. 1-4	460
i. 2, iv. 14, v. 9-11	457
i. 3	339

PAGE

i. 4 - - - 449
i. 5 - - - 345
i. 6, 8, 10 - 460
i. 7 - - 457, 467
i. 9 - - - 346
i. 10 - 335, 468
ii. 1 - - 393
ii. 1, 2, iv. 10 - 466
ii. 3 - - 471
ii. 3, 4, 5 - 47
ii. 3, 5 - - 469
ii. 4 - - 460
ii. 6, 10 - - 335
ii. 7 - - 463
ii. 7, 8 - - 471
ii. 8 - 345, 441
ii. 12-14 - 460, 468
ii. 13 - 47, 462
ii. 13, 14 - 261, 437
ii. 14 - 334, 447
ii. 14, v. 4 - 405
ii. 17 - - 437
ii. 18 - 441, 460
ii. 18, 19 - - 470
ii. 18, 22 - - 46
ii. 20 418, 436, 466
ii. 22 23 - - 459
ii. 24 - 428, 462
ii. 28 439, 441, 472
ii. 29 - - 472
iii. 1 - - 465
iii. 3 - - 437
iii. 4 - - 404
iii. 5 406, 466, 472
iii. 7 - - 465
iii. 8 - - 465
iii. 9 - 418, 467
iii. 11 - 462, 471
iii. 13 - - 255
iii. 13, 14 - 396
iii. 14 270, 345, 426, 437, 447, 466
iii. 16 - 405, 437, 449, 461
iii. 16, 24 - 469
iii. 17 - - 468
iii. 19 - - 469
iii. 20 - - 459
iii. 22 - 471, 472
iii. 22, 24 - 47
iii. 24 - - 466
iv. 1-3 - 389, 434
iv. 2 - - 351
iv. 2, 3 - 207, 325
iv. 2, 13 - - 469

PAGE

iv. 3 46, 454, 460
iv. 3, 5 - - 7
iv. 3, ii. 7 - 286
iv. 4 - - 47
iv. 12 - 330, 343
iv. 13 - - 459
iv. 14 - - 402
iv. 15 - - 465
iv. 16 - 345, 448, 449
iv. 17 - 442, 472
v. 1 - - 336
v. 2 - - 469
v. 3 - - 47
v. 4 47, 287, 335
v. 6 - - 461
v. 7 - - 463
v. 8 - - 467
v. 10 - - 463
v. 13 - 460, 461
v. 14, 15 - - 472
v. 16 - 454, 469
v. 18 - - 467
v. 18-20 - - 464
v. 19 - - 389
v. 20 - - 345

2 JOHN

1, 8 - - 456
4, 3Jn. 3 - - 457
5 - - - 462
5, 1 Jn, iii. 11 - 457
7 - - 207, 325
7, 1 Jn. iv. 2 - 457
8 - - - 464
9, 1 Jn. ii. 23, v. 12 457
10 - - - 470
12, 1 Jn. i. 4 - 457
12, 3 Jn. 13, 14 457
13 - - - 457

3 JOHN

3, 6, 12 - - 457
4, Jn. xv. 13 - 458
10 - - - 470
11, 1 Jn. iii. 6, 10 458
12, Jn. viii. 13, 14 458
13, Jn. xvi. 12 - 458

JUDE

6 - - - - 16

REVELATION

PAGE

i. 1 - - 40
i. 1-3 - - 35
i. 1-8 - - 70
i. 3 - - - 47
i. 4 - - - 49
i. 4, 17 - - 55
i. 6 - - - 102
i. 7 - - - 47
i. 8 - - - 70
i. 9 - - 55, 70
i. 10 - - 40
i. 13 - - 36
i. 14 - - 164
i. 17 - - 30
i. 18 - - 108
ii. 1 - 66, 74, 76
ii. 2, 3, 5 - 55
ii. 5, 16 - - 30
ii. 6, 15 - 77, 78
ii. 7 - 47, 261
ii. 9 - 74, 77
ii. 10 - - 85
ii. 12 - - 140
ii. 13 - - 85
ii. 14, 15 - - 79
ii. 14, 20 - - 463
ii. 16 - - 71
ii. 17 - 74, 409
ii. 18 - - 74
ii. 25 - - 78
ii. 26 - 29, 424
ii. 27 - 47, 75, 124
iii. 1 66, 75, 101
iii. 3 - - 76
iii. 3, 11 - - 30
iii. 3, 18 - - 151
iii. 5, 21 - - 59
iii. 7 - 74, 75
iii. 8, 10 - - 47
iii. 9 - - 77
iii. 11 - - 79
iii. 12 165, 183, 409
iii. 14 - 75, 163
iii. 21 - - 30
iv. 1 - 29, 36
iv. 2 - 40, 330
iv. 2, 3 - - 163
iv. 5 - 66, 101
v. 2 - - 113
v. 6 66, 69, 127
v. 9 - - 409
v. 9, 10 - - 141
v. 11 - - 93
v. 12 - - 29

REVELATION (*cont.*)

PAGE

vi. 8 20, 71, 107
vi. 9 70, 85, 109, 1[illegible]
vi. 9-11 - - 56
vi. 10 - 74, 160
vi. 11 - 32, 109
vi. 12-14 - - 27
vi. 12-17 - - 27
vi. 15 - - 29
vi. 16, 17 - 58
vi. 17 109, 113, 143
vii. 1-8 - - 53
vii. 3 - - 141
vii. 4-8 - - 45
vii. 9-17 - - 142
vii. 12 - - 29
vii. 14 - - 85
vii. 17 - - 141
viii.-ix. - - 27
viii. 2 - 66, 112
viii. 2 ff., 13 - 26
viii. 3, 5 - - 109
viii. 5 - - 110
viii. 7 - - 55
viii. 7-12 - - 112
viii. 12 - - 27
viii. 13 26, 112, 143
ix. 1 - - 169
ix. 1-12 - - 108
ix. 1-19 - - 112
ix. 3 - - 29
ix. 3, 10, 19 - 30
ix. 4 - - 110
ix. 12 - - 20
ix. 13 - 109, 160
ix. 15, 17, 18 - 143
ix. 18 - - 143
ix. 20, 21 26, 45, 112
x.-xi. 14 - - 26
x. 1 - - 71
x. 6 - - 55
x. 7 27, 36, 40, 113
x. 8-11 - - 40
x. 11 - 115, 117
xi. 1 - - 22
xi. 1-13 - - 113
xi. 1, 2 - - 53
xi. 2, 3 - 29, 56
xi. 5 - - 36
xi. 6 - - 30
xi. 8 115, 152, 153
xi. 9 - - 115
xi. 9, 11 - 29, 56
xi. 14, 15 - 112

PAGE

xi. 15 - - 100
xi. 15-18 - 27, 148
xi. 15-19 - - 110
xi. 17 - 44, 101
xi. 18 29, 36, 40, 58, 143, 160
xi. 19 92
xi. 24 141
xii. 1 [illegible] 185
xii. [illegible] 185
xii. [illegible] 124
xii. 6 [illegible] 163
xii. 7-14 - 50
xii. 9, 10, 12 - 32
xii. 10 17
xii. 10-11 - 122
xii. 12 - 110
xii. 13-14 29, 112
xii. 14 29
xii. 17 47, 122
xiii. 1 22, 49, 115, 128 ff., 153
xiii. 2 152
xiii. 2, 4 [illegible] - 29
xiii. 157
xiii. 3, 12 138
xiii. 8 29, 50
xiii. 7 - 20
xiii. 10 30
xiii. 11-14 - 135
xiii. 15 32, 85, 140, 140
xiii. 16 - 29, 110
xiii. 18 72, 154
xiv. 1 - 110
xiv. 1-5 - 140
xiv. 3 - - 102
xiv. 4 - 143
xiv. 6 175
xiv. 6-20 - 143
xiv. 7 - 27, 147
xiv. 8 - 115
xiv. 10 141, 153
xiv. 10, 10 - 58
xiv. 12 - - 47
xiv. 13 - - 27
xiv. 14-20 - 27
xiv. 15, 17 - 147
xiv. 18 - 30, 100
xiv. 20 - - 104
xv.-xviii - 148
xv. 1 - - 140
xv. 1, 7 - 58
xv. 3 - 40, 44
xv. 4 [illegible]

PAGE

xv. 5 [illegible]
xv. 6 [illegible]
xvi. - 28
xvi. 1, 19 - 58
xvi. 6 48
xvi. 7 [illegible] 160
xvi. 9 86
xvi. 9, 11 [illegible]
xvi. 13 [illegible]
xvi. 15 [illegible]
xvi. 17 92
xvi. 17-21 28
xvi. 18, 10 [illegible]
xvi. 19 113, 138
xvi. 20 27
xvii.-xviii. [illegible]
xvii. 1 [illegible]
xvii. 1-10, 18 - [illegible]
xvii. 1, 18 [illegible]
xvii. 2 144
xvii. 3 40
xvii. 6 86, [illegible]
xvii. [illegible] 72
xvii. 10 30
xvii. 8 [illegible] 125, 182, 138, 180, 1[illegible]
xvii. 8, 9 154
xvii. 10, 11 163
xvii. 11 - [illegible] 151
xvii. 11 17 153
xvii. 12 18 158
xvii. 13 20
xvii. 15, 17 158
xvii. 14 - 163
xvii. [illegible] - 170
xvii. 18 154
xviii. 28
xviii. 1 30
xviii. 20 - - 40
xviii. 20, 24 157, 160
xviii. 21 - 113
xviii. 24 - 40, 80
xix. 1-6 - 100
xix. 5 29
xix. 7 174
xix. 9 - 37, 170
xix. 11 105
xix. 11 16 - 28
xix. 12 105
xix. 13 - - 48
xix. 15 58, 71, 75, 124
xix. 18 - 20
xix. 20 135
xx. 1 - 17, 160

	PAGE
xx. 3	36
xx. 4	20, 30, 56, 70, 166, 175
xx. 6	30, 37
xx. 11	59
xx. 11-xxi. 8	109
xx. 12	29, 59
xx. 13	71, 108, 441
xxi. 1, 5	409
xxi. 2	174
xxi. 5-8	174
xxi. 6	179, 206
xxi. 8	86
xxi. 9	175
xxi. 10	40
xxi. 22	20
xxi. 24, 27	174
xxii.	14
xxii. 1, 17	206
xxii. 6	174, 179
xxii. 6, 8, 9	36
xxii. 7, 9	47
xxii. 7, 12, 20	30, 183
xxii. 7, 14	37
xxii. 8	40
xxii. 9, 10, 13	179
xxii. 10-12	183
xxii. 13	55, 71
xxii. 14	30
xxii. 15	174
xxii. 16	36
xxii. 17	184

INDEX TO SUBJECTS AND NAMES

Abaris, sent by Apollo, 49
Abraham, called a pillar, 87
Additions to the Fourth Gospel, 219
Adversary, the, 404. cp. Devil, Evil One, Satan
Age, the, of Jesus, 370 f.
Ages, four (Hindu and Persian), 166, 169
Ages, the two (Jewish), 171
Ahura Mazda, the righteous rule of, 9
  Worship of, 97
  Victory of, 169, 177
  His sovereignty, 315
Aion (Aeon), at Eleusis, 64
  Birth of, celebrated at Alexandria, 379
Akiba, ascends to heaven, 92
Albinus, a Platonist, at Smyrna, 201
Alêthinos, 449, 464
Alexander the Great, 12
Altar, the, in heaven, 32, 85, 111
Amarāvati, city of Indra, 179
'Amen,' the, 75
Amos, of Tekoa, 7
Anaxagoras, on Mind (*Nous*), 298
Ancient of Days, the, 71
Andrew, becomes a disciple, 239
Andrew and Philip, 229, 268, 362, 421
Angels of the Presence, seven, 16, 112
Angels, agents of revelation, 36
Angels, their functions and variety, 16, 54
Angels, of the Churches, 72 f.
Angels of the winds, four, 109 f.
Angels, seven, receive seven trumpets, 112
Angels, seven, receive seven bowls, 149
Antichrist, identifications of, 5
  in Rev., 113 ff.
  in John, and 1 John 286, 325, 454, 459
Antichrists, 463, 470
Antipas, of Pergamum, 67, 85
Antioch, Christianity at, 205
Apelles, of Ascalon, 135
Apep, defeated by Rê, 167
Apocalypse, the, see the Revelation
Apocalypse, principles of, 6 ff.
Apocalypses, in the early Church, 51
Apollinarius, on the Logos in Christ, 361 f.
Apollo, Looser and Washer, 68
  and the Python, 119
Apollonius of Tyana, 135, 196, 200, 279
Apollos, at Ephesus, 196, 272, 285
Apoui, an Egyptian prophet, 111
Apuleius, on the Godhead, 65
  on the mysteries of Isis, 280, 414
Arda Virāf, in the Home of Song, 97
Aristaeus, leaves his body, 49
Aristion, named by Papias, 212
Artemis, at Ephesus, 197
Ascension of Isaiah, 16
Asha, the Righteous Order, 315
Asia, the province of, 62
Asiarchs, the, at Ephesus, 83, 180
Assumption of Moses, the, 19
Astrology, influence of, 51, 106, 127
Athena, symbol of mind, 315 f.
  a helper in good work, 393
Atheotês, charged against Christians, 33
Augustus, worship of, 82 f.
  starts the Empire, 155
Azazel, to be bound, 168

Bâbîs, the, of Persia, 211

Babylon, the Great, 152
on many waters, 153
Babylonian conceptions, influence of, 15
doctrine of two worlds, 273
Balaam-teaching, 79
Baptism, of Jesus, 363, 370
in Acts, 410
in Paul, 416
in John, 411, 417 ff., 461
Baptist, the, his ministry introduced, 319
Baruch, Apocalypse of, 24, 49, 52, 54 ff.
Basilides, in Egypt, 285
at Alexandria, 380
Basiliskos, the, 381
Bathing, in the Mysteries, 413 f.
Beast, the, 54, 59, 151 f., 153 ff., 169
from the Abyss, 115
seven-headed, 129 ff.
the number and name of, 137 ff.
the second, 135
Beatitudes, in Rev., 37
Beliar, to be bound, 17, 39, 126
appears in Nero, 157
Belief, its nature, 335 f.
a condition of salvation, 446 f.
its fruits, 461
Beloved Disciple the, 192, 236, 240, 246, 249, 251, 461
Berosus, at Cos, 62
Bethany, the unction of Jesus at, 230
Birth from above, 411 ff.
out of God, 336, 412, 440, 467
in the Hermetica, 415
Blind man cured, 382
Boll, on the Revelation, 93
Book, the, with seven seals, 100
Bousset, on the Revelation, 121
Bowls, seven, 149 f.
Brahmā, the abode of, 99
Bread of life, the, 425 ff.
Bride, the wife of the Lamb, 179
Buddha, the birth of, 244
death of, 243
the apocalypse of, 102 f.
Buddhism and the Law of the Deed, 10 f.
the King of Glory, 166
the Pure Land, 182
Docetism in, 286, 325
'seeing the Buddha,' 328
Caesar, Julius, worship of, 81
as first Emperor, 155
Saviour, 403
Caiaphas, on the death of Jesus, 267, 283, 383
Cana, Jesus manifests his glory, 328
the marriage at, 377 ff.
Celsus, on religious enthusiasts, 350
Cerinthus, John attributed to, 192
at Ephesus, 196, 217
Gospel against, 262
and Ebionites, 264, 285
on Jesus, 325, 460
'Chariot, the,' Ezek. i., 93
Charles, Dr., translations by, 6, 24 and Commentary, *passim*
Cherubim, in Ezekiel, 93, 95 f.
Child, the, of the Lady-mother, 118, 164
Christ, as Head of the Church, 67 f. 74 f.
as a title, in Rev., 166. See Jesus, and Messiah.
as God's Logos in Ignatius, 324
Christianity, the fulfilment of Judaism, 178, 261
a gift from heaven, 262
Christians, persecution of, 32
difficulties of, 76 ff.
their dangers, 84 f., 394, 470
Christology, Ebionite, 264
Pauline, 269
Church, the, pre-existent, 124 ff.
divisions in the, 460
life in, 470
Churches, the Seven, 63 ff., 71 f.
Cleanthes, on the *Logos*, 297, 306
Clemens, executed by Domitian, 34
Clement, of Alexandria, 208, 226
on the 'spiritual' Gospel, 242
on Books of Thoth, 305
Coming, the, of the Son of Man, 438
its Johannine equivalent, 439 ff.
Commandments, the, of Jesus, 396
Confession of sin, 469
Conventus Juridici, 71
Cornutus, on the *Logos* in Hermes, 307
Cripple, the, at the pool of Bethesda, 244, 381
Cross, changed view of the, 399, 406

Cult of the Emperor, 81, 136, 198
Cybelê, the worship of, 196 f., 199, 280
Cyrus, as Yahweh's Messiah, 8

Dahāk, the serpent, destroyed, 168
Daniel, the Book of, 14
  vision of judgment, 15, 147
Darkness, the sphere of, 318, 465
Day, the last, 426
  of Yahweh, the, 7
  of God, 151
Death, the day of Jesus', 372 ff.
  of Jesus, its significance, 397 ff., 467
  and Hades, 72, 75, 108, 177
  and Pestilence, 108
  hopes for life after, 9
  the second, 177
Deification, in religious philosophy, 453
  of Christians, 314
Devil, the, 117, 126, 130, 167, 389, 454
Dionysius of Alexandria, 43
Dionysos, converts water into wine, 379
Diotrephes, fosters church strife, 470
Disciple, the Beloved, 192, 236, 240, 246, 249, 251, 461
Disciples, the first, of Jesus, 238 ff.
Docetism, in Asia Minor, 286
  Christian and Buddhist, 286, 325
Docetists, the, 460
Dodekaeteris, the, 106
Domitian, the, Rev. dated in his reign, 31, 35
  executes Flavius Clemens, 34
  worship of, 82
  the eighth, xvii. 11, 157
Domitilla, wife of Flavius Clemens, 34
Dositheus, of Samaria, 245
  as Son of God, 350
Dragon, the, 118 ff., 130, 151, 167, 169
Dusares, birth of, at Petra, 379

Ea, god of the deep, 182
Ebion, and the Ebionites, 262 ff.
Ecclesiasticus, Wisdom in, 293
Edessa, calendar of Church at, 212
Elder, the, author of 2 and 3 John, 213
Elder, the, letters of, 456
  possible author of the Gospel, 215 f., 236, 458
  title applied to Polycarp, and heads of Roman Church, 213
  John, the, 41 f., 192, 212 ff., 250
Elders, the Twenty-four, 96 ff.
Elect Lady, the, 456
Eleusis, mysteries of, 413
Elijah, prophet and witness, 115
Emperor, worship of the, 81 ff., 198 f.
Enoch, the book of, 5, 6, 12 ff., 19, 24
  traverses the universe, 49
  visits heaven, 91
  as a witness, 115
Entheos, in Greek religion, 49
Enthroned, the (Rev.), 93
Ephesus, the Church at, 63, 74, 76f
  contrast with Jerusalem, 195 ff.
Epictetus, at Nicopolis, 199 f.
  on the wise man, 350, 452
Epiphany, festival of, 380
Epistêmê, or wisdom (Philo), 301
  leads to *Gnosis*, 453
2 *Esdras*, see 4 Ezra
Eternal life, 387, 437 f., 445 ff.
Eucharist, the, 419 ff., 461
Evangelist, the, Jew or Greek, 43, 257
  belongs to a Fellowship, 225, 358, 366
Evil, matter as, 324 f.
Ezekiel, and personal religion, 8
  on national revival, 18
  his vision of the Presence, 93
Ezra, and the Priests' Code, 8, 12
4 Ezra (2 Esdras), 6, 19, 24, 52, 55, 56

'Faithful and True,' 163, 165
Feeding of the Multitude, the, 421 ff.
Fellowship, language of the, 225, 258, 366, 457
Forty-two Months, 114, 132
Fox, George, language of vision, 52
Fravashis, the, 73
'Friends of Augustus,' 136
Fulness, the, 325, 446. See *Pleroma*
Future, the, in early prophecy, 7, 8

Gaius, the emperor (Caligula), 133, 135, 139
Gaius, in 3 John, 457, 470

Gebhurah, the Power, 292
Gentiles, future of the, 21
Glorification, the, of the Son, 399
Gnosis, 287, 351
the goal of *Epistêmê*, 453
Gnosticism, Jewish, 277
Christian, 284 ff., 460
God, in Apocalyptic teaching, 6 ff., 23
in Rev., his activity, 53
his eternity, 64
as the enthroned, 93
his wrath, 109
his Reign, 116
as Judge, 176
in the New Jerusalem, 181
in John, as Spirit, 342
his unceasing activity, 343
life, light, and love, 345, 464 f.
as the Father, 345
his love for the world, 353, 442, 449
union of believers with, 449, 465
Gog from Magog, 175 f.
Gospels, Four recognised, 193 f.
Gospel, the Fourth, compared with Rev., 43 ff., 359
ascribed to various writers, 192
testimony of Irenaeus, 41, 194, 208 ff.
possible date, 207
possibly composed by the Elder, 215 f., 236, 458
additions to it, 219
suggestions of partition, 221
work of a Redactor, 222
varieties in language, 224
product of a Fellowship, 225 ff., 255, 270
in the Muratorian Canon, and Clement of Alexandria, 226
relation to the Synoptics, 227 ff., 367
to Mark, 228
to Matthew, 229
to Luke, 230
its origin, 250
its purpose, 254
localities and Jewish usages, 257
its original language, *ib.*
contrast with Synoptics, 258
relation to Judaism, 261, 266
Victorinus of Pettau, on, 262, 285
the discourses, 271, 386 ff.
miracles in, 381 ff.
Gospel, adapted to a tradition, 359
a work of imagination, 359
its main divisions, 368
marks of time and place, 369
Superhistoric, 376
Gospel according to the Hebrews, the, 219
Greek antithesis between spirit and matter, 273
Gregory the Monk, 213
Gunkel, on the Revelation, 93, 98, 121

Haggādah, the religious tale, 246
Har-Magedon, 151
Harnack, on the Apocalypse, 6
and the Gospel, 43, 438, 467
Hathor-Isis, and her flight, 121 ff.
Heaven and earth, the new, 178
Hebrews, Epistle to the, 83
Hegesippus, relates the martyrdom of James, 213
Helicon, Egyptian magician, 135
Heracleitus, on the *Logos*, 296
Heracleon, on the Fourth Gospel, 285
Herakles, priesthood of, 429
Hermas, on Son and Spirit, 365
Hermes, in Greek theology, 304 f.
the Egyptian Thoth, 305 f.
in Orphic hymns and Stoic theology, 306
as Creator, 316
Trismegistus, imparts revelations, 50 f., 303 ff.
Hermetica, the, rebirth in, 311, 414 f.
Holy One, of Jesus, 436, 447, 466 (?)
Hope, only in 1 John, 441, 447
Horsemen, the Four, 104 ff.
Hydra, the constellation, 127

'I am,' the sevenfold, 387
Ignatius, did he know John, 205
denounces Docetism, 286
on Christ as God's Logos, 324
on the Eucharist, 427, 434
Incarnation, object of the, 354
Indra, slays Vritra, 168
his city, 179
Intercession, for sinners, 467, 469
Irenaeus, on the date of Rev., 31
on John, 41, 194, 208 ff.
on the Four Living Creatures, 95
on the restored Jerusalem, 172

Irenaeus, on the Four Gospels, 193 f.
identifies John with the Apostle, 208
on the age of Jesus, 215, 370
Isaiah, on a Day of Yahweh, 7
in rapture, 49
liii., quotations from, 408
Isis at Sais, 64
queen of heaven, 121
her mysteries, 280
rebirth in, 413

James, son of Zebedee, death of, 212, 263
confused with the Lord's brother, 218
James, the Lord's brother, death of, 213, 263
confused with son of Zebedee, 218
his ascetic life, 263
Jeremiah, on the future, 7, 8
Jerome, on Dositheus, 245
on fishes, 247
Jerusalem, ? in xvi. 19, 152, 171
a heavenly, 59
the New, 172 ff., 178 ff.
in Justin, Irenaeus, etc., 172
Jesus Christ, in Rev., his titles, 67, 71
the Lamb, 101, 161
'Faithful and True,' 163
his Messianic reign, 171
in the New Jerusalem, 181
his advent awaited, 59, 184
in Ebionite Christology, 264
in Pauline, 283, 347, 366
in John, as the Saviour of the World, 191, 402, 454
length of his ministry, 214, 368
as Rabbi, Teacher, 238, 241, 385 ff.
recognised as the Messiah, 239, 241
Son of God and King of Israel, 241, 385
Messiah and Son of God, 254, 339, 346 ff.
Son of Man, 241, 347, 365
the witness of his works, 260, 383
as Light of the World, 268, 355
the Incarnate Logos, 313 ff.
the descent of the Spirit upon him, 337, 364
Jesus Christ, the revelation of God, 346
his mission, 353 ff., 387, 401
his endowment, 353
as Revealer, 354
worship of, 356
his titles, 357
as a man, 360 ff.
his *psychê*, 362
his spirit, 363
his age, 370 f.
day of death, 372
as the Paschal Lamb, 373
at Cana, 377
his miracles, 381
the Resurrection and the Life, 355, 383
his works, 383 ff.
as the Good Shepherd, 389
at the last meal, 391 ff.
union of disciples with, 394
significance of his death, 397 ff.
as the Lamb of God, 406
communicates himself at the Eucharistic meal, 422
walks on the lake, 423
discourse at Capernaum, 424 ff.
in 1 John, purpose of his manifestation, 463
as propitiation for sins, 466
his death, 467
his expected return, 472
Jews, at Smyrna, 74, 77
resistance to Emperor-cult, 133
in the Gospel, 261, 337, 369, 387, 390, 403, 406
Jezebel, at Thyatira, 79
Job, the book of, 9, 12
Johanan ben Zakkai, Rabbi, 19, 87, 92 f.
Johannine language in Mt. and Lk., 231
John, the Apostle, 41 f., 46
tradition of martyrdom, 42, 212 f.
traditional author of Rev., 31
traditional author of the Fourth Gospel, 194, 208 f., 250, 373, 385
John, the Baptist and Jesus, 236 ff.
John, the Elder, 41 f., 192, 212 ff., 250
John, Mark, 192
John, the Prophet, 40 f., 65, 219, 250
Jose ben Qisma, Rabbi, 46
Judgment, in prophetic theology, 7 ff.
in Enoch, 13, 19 f.

Judgment, in Daniel, 15
in Baruch and 4 Ezra, 59
in Rev., 104, 116, 156, 176 f.
in John, 402, 405, 441 f.
in Buddhist folk-lore, 10
in Plato, 11
Hindu, Persian, Greek, 146
Julius Caesar, cult of, 81, 198
and the death stroke, 133
starts the Empire, 155
as 'God manifest,' 350
Justin, on the Revelation, 31
on the restored Jerusalem, 172
his philosophical studies, 201 f.
the Fourth Gospel? 203
on Jewish Christians, 265
on 'our mysteries,' 281
on the Logos and Hermes, 307
in former teachers, 317
on Spirit and Logos, 364
on Baptism, 418
on the Eucharist, 436

Kalki, and the end of the Age, 22, 166
Karma, the law of, 10
King of Glory, the Buddhist, 166
King of Israel, Jesus as, 241, 366
Kings, ten, 158
Knowledge, in John, 287, 447 ff.
'of the Lord,' in Judaism, 274, 450; in later Judaism, 451
in religious philosophy, 452
Krishna, as everlasting, 64

Lactantius, quotes Hermetic texts, 304
Lamb, the, in Rev., 101, 140, 149, 181, 407
of God, the, 237 f., 266, 407
the paschal, 373, 376, 407
the, a prophetic type, 407
Laodicea, the Church at, 63, 76, 87
Law, the, in Pauline and Johannine teaching, 267 f.
the ideal, or Torah, 294
liberation from, 395
Lazarus, the resurrection of, 383
Legalism, in Johannine teaching, 396, 404
Leto and her flight, 120
Letter, the First, product of a Fellowship, 225, 457
Levi enters heaven, 91
Life after Death, hopes for, 9
Life and Light, in John, 317, 345
Life in the Hermetica, 310, 415
in Mandaean *Gnosis*, 320
Light, God as, 464 f.
'Living Creatures,' the Four, 95 f.
Irenaeus on, 95
'Living One,' the, 71
Logos philosophy, the, 272
in Wisd. of Sol., 295
in Heracleitus, 296
in Cleanthes, 297
in Philo, 300 ff.
in Epictetus, 307, 452
and the Hermetica, 310, 415, 453
in the Prologue, 313 ff., 326
becomes flesh, 323 ff.
varieties of meaning, 334
inconsistent with evil, 337
relation to the Holy Spirit, 337f.
as Scripture, or 'revelation,' 447
'of salvation,' 462
of Jesus, 471
Lord, as a title of Jesus, 269 f., 423
Lücke, on Enoch and 4 Ezra, 6
Luther, on the Revelation, 4

Magnesia, the Church at, 63
Mahābhārata, the, 21
Mandaeans, and Johannine teaching, 287 ff.
in Lower Mesopotamia, 320
Manifestation, the, of the Son of God, 465
the expected, 472
Marduk, Son of Ea, 101, 235
slays Tiamat, 121, 165
marriage festival of, 161
Marriage, of the Lamb, 161, 163
a divine, in Babylonia, Greece, and Israel, 161
Martha and Mary, at Bethany, 230, 383
Martineau, on Messianic Ideas, 6
Melito, on the Rev., 31
on Nero and Domitian, 33
Me'mra, or Word, 291, 313.
Menander, on *Nous*, 302
Menander of Kapparatea, 192, 285
Mēru, Mount, in India, 179
Messiah, the, his reign on earth, 56, 58
to reign on earth, 170 f.
in Enoch, 75
before sun or star, 124
on Mount Zion, 141, 164
'coming quickly,' 184. See Jesus Christ

Michael and his angels, 118, 122
Midrash, in the Old Testament, 252
Mind, the Good, in Persian theology, 315
Mind (*Nous*), according to Anaxagoras, 298
in the Hermetica, 310, 317
Ministry, the length of the, 368 ff.
Miracles, 381 ff., cp. Signs, and Works
Mission of Jesus, the, 353, 391, 401
Mithraism, 281, 414
Mithras-Liturgy, the, 281, 330, 414, 452
Monogenês, as a Gnostic entity, 314
its meaning and use, 331 f.
Montanism, in Phrygia, 38 f.
Moses, prophet and witness, 115
the song of, 149
Muratorian Canon, on John, 226, 262
'Must,' of divine necessity, 37, 89, 91, 156, 398, 400, 411
Mysteries, various, 199
of Eleusis, 279
of Isis, 280, 413
rebirth in, 413 f.

Nānak, founder of the Sikhs, 65
Nathanael, found by Philip, 240, 348, 351, 365, 376, 385
Nebo (Nabu), son of Marduk, 101
Nechepso, imparts revelations to Petosiris, 50
Nero, persecution under, 32, 33
worship of, 82
the number of his name, 138 f.
pretenders to his return, 156 f.
Nicodemus, 341, 366, 376, 398, 410
Nicolaitans, the, 71, 77 f.
Nicolas, of Antioch, 78, 205
Nous, in the teaching of Anaxagoras, 298
in Menander, 302
in the Hermetica, 310, 317
as a Gnostic entity, 314
cp. Spirit, 360, 363
Numbers, as equivalents of names, 137 f.
as symbols, 244-247

Odes of Solomon, the, 276, 451
Olympus, the heavenly, 180
Omophagy, in the worship of Dionysos, 432
Origen, on material and spiritual truth, 242, 253
Orphism, in Greece, 11, 278
Osiris, bestows water of life, 111, 182

Papias, of Hierapolis, on John, 41 f., 210 ff.
Paraclete, in Philo, 303
in John, 393, 443
of Jesus, 466
Paradise, in the third heaven, 54
to be opened, 59
Paroimia, in the language of Jesus, 388
Parousia, the, in 1 John, 439, 459
Parthian kings, 105, 151, 156 f., 159
Passovers, three, 368
the last meal, 372
Patmos, John in, 70
Paul, on the Advent, 37
on prophesyings, 38 f.
on the Law, 267, 395
on Christ, 268 ff., 347, 352, 366
and Hellenistic speculation, 282
on Baptism, 416
on the Lord's Supper, 419, 429ff.
Pergamum, the Church at, 63, 80
Persecution of Christians, 32, 84 ff.
expected, 119, 132
accomplished, 150
Persian Dualism, 273
Peter, named Cephas, 239
on the lake, 246 ff., 368, 373, 385
Petosiris, receives revelations, 50
Petronius, governor of Syria, 133 f.
Pharisees, in the Fourth Gospel, 258 f.
Philadelphia, the Church at, 63, 75, 87
Philip, the Apostle, 240, 362, 385, 421
Philip, the Evangelist, at Hierapolis, 196, 218
Philip, of Sidê, 213
Philo, experiences of rapture, 50
on the Eternal, 65
and the method of Allegory, 272
on the Logos, 298 ff.
the Paraclete, 303
Jacob's dream, 349
Philosophy, schools of, 271 f.
Pindar, and the felicity of the just, 11

Plato, on judgment after death, 11
on the underworld, 54
the temporal and the eternal, 65
precious stones, 94
the procession of the Gods, 99
on the world, 298
Platonism, Justin on, 201
Pleroma, as a technical term, 325, 329
Pliny, on the progress of Christianity, 385
Plutarch, on Truth, 199
Poimandres, and Hermetic texts, 303 ff.
Polycarp, of Smyrna, 31
letter to the Philippians, 206
his teaching, 209
designated Elder, 213
against Docetism, 286
Prince (Ruler) of this world, 389
judged, 284, 405, 454
Priscillian, his early use of 1 John v. 7, 463
Prologue, the, 290 ff.
connection with Wisdom, 295
was it part of the original Gospel? 333 ff., 338, 365
Prophecy, the New, 38 f.
fulfilment of, 397
Prophet, the False, 54, 59, 135, 151, 169
Prophets, in the early Church, 37f.
Greek, 37
Propitiation, Jesus as, 466 f.
Proverbs, Wisdom in, 293
Psalms of Solomon, the, 19, 347
Psychê, in Jesus, 362
Ptolemy Philopator, 137
Pure Land, the Buddhist, 182
Purpose, the divine, of righteousness, 89 ff.

Rê, defeats the serpent Apep, 167
Reason, see *Logos*
Rebirth, 68
in the Hermetica, 311, 414
in the Mysteries, 413 ff.
Recompense or retribution hereafter, 146
Reconciliation, the Pauline Gospel of, 397
Reign of the saints, the, 69
Renovation, the era of, 9
Repentance, not named in John, 403
Reshith, Prov. viii. 22, Gen. i. 1, 294
Resurrection, in Dan., 18
includes the patriarchs, 18
and the Gentiles, 19
for the Judgment, 176
in John, 441 f.
Revelation, the, of John, the Reformers on, 4
characteristics of Apocalypse, 6 ff.
its outlook, 22
its materials, 26 ff.
probable dates, 31, 35, 156, 159, 250
attributed to the Apostle, 31, 41
product of Church prophecy, 37
John the prophet, 40
John the Elder, 42
compared with the Gospel, 43
linguistic affinities, 47
surrounding influences, 48 ff.
astrology in, 51, 106, 127
its significance, 185
Principal Oman on, 186
Revelation, the Johannine Gospel of, 397
Revelations, from on high, 50
Rewards of faithfulness, 86 f.
Rhêmata, words, 436, 462
Rita, as Law (Vedic), 315
Rome, to be judged, 58
homage to, 81
typified by the Beast, 131
judgment on, 86, 144, 148, 152ff.

Salvation, in John, 267, 283
ideas of, 402
Samaritan Woman, the, 245, 261, 388, 417
Sardis, the Church at, 63, 76, 87, 101
Satan, the Adversary or Accuser, 17. See Devil, and Dragon
bound, 167, 169
flung into the burning lake, 176
Satans, the, 17
Saviour, of Artemis, 197
Julius Caesar and Augustus, 403
of the world, of Nero, 82
of Jesus, 191, 402, 454
Scriptures, the testimony of the, 387
Seal, the seventh, opened, 111
Secrets of Enoch, the, 15, 24, 54, 170

Serapis, the table of, 281, 430
Serpent, Apep (Egyptian), Vritra (Indian), Dahāk (Persian), finally destroyed, 167 f., 178
the brazen, 398
Seven Angels of the Presence, 66, 112
Bowls, 104, 149 f.
Churches, the, 63 ff., 71 f.
Emperors, 131, 133, 155
Eyes of the Lamb, 66, 95
Heavens, 15
Hills, of Rome, 131
Holy Angels, 66
Horns of the Lamb, 101
Immortal Holy Ones, 66
Lamps, 66
Lampstands, 71 f., 94
Letters to the Churches, 73
Mountains, 154
Orders of rest, 145
Seals, 100, 104
Spirits of God, 65 ff., 94
Stars, 66 f., 72, 74
Thunders, 113
Trumpets, 104, 150
Vowels, 69
Sevens, in Rev., 26 ff., 54, 63
in John, 260
Seventy, the mission of the, 244
Shekhinah, the Presence, 292, 393
Shepherd, the Good, 389, 405
Signs, wrought by Jesus, 343, 368. Cp. Works
Simon the Mage, 135, 192, 245, 273, 285
as the Power of God, 350
Sin, deliverance from, 68
to be taken away, 237, 406, 466
forgiveness of, by confession, 469
'unto death,' 469
Sirach, the Son of, 12
Wisdom in, 293 f.
Smyrna, the Church at, 63, 75, 77, 87
Socrates, on diviners and prophets, 37
Son, the, in John, 224
in Mt. and Lk., 233
in relation to the Father, 356, 444
subordination to the Father, 396
Son of God, 233, 236 f., 265
in Judaism, 268
in Paul, 269
in John, 287
Son of God—
of the Messiah, 339, 346 f
of Jesus, 351 f.
Son of Man, in Matt., 19
one like unto, in Enoch, 19
in Rev., 71, 147
of the Messiah, 347 f., 366
of Jesus, 365
Son of Rê (in Egypt), 349
Soshyans, the Saviour (Persian), 168
Spirit, descent of the, 91
in Paul and John, 284
its relation to the Logos, 337
in Jesus, 363 ff.
of truth, 393
gift of the, at baptism, 410 f.
Spirits of God, the seven, 65 ff., 94
Supper, the Last, 391
Supper, the Lord's, 419 ff.
Symbolic stories, 243 ff., 252

Table, the Lord's, 429
Tatian, compiles the Gospel 'by Four,' 194
Taurobolium, the, 68, 280
Temple, the, in heaven, 54, 93, 149
in Jerusalem, to be measured, 114
Tertullian, of Carthage, 173, 208
on the Stoic Logos, 306
on Hermes Trismegistus, 308
Testaments of the XII. Patriarchs, 19, 24 f.
Theodotus, disciple of Valentinus, 285
Theophilus, of Antioch, knew 'John' 194, 208
Theos, in the wide sense, 301
of the Logos, and of Christians, 314
Thoth, in Egyptian theology, 305
Thousand years, period of a, 169 f.
Throne, the, in heaven, 92 f.
'Thrones,' an angelic rank, 97
Thunders, Seven, 113
Thyatira, the Church at, 63, 74, 79 f., 87
Tiamat, slain by Marduk, 121
Time, times, and half a time, 118
Tralles, the Church at, 63
Trumpets, seven, 112, 113
Turner, Prof. C. H., on the seven Emperors, 155
Twelve disciples, the, 240, 421
Twelvehundred and sixty days, 118

Union, the, of God, Christ, and believers, 449
Union with God in religious philosophy, 452
Universality of Christianity, 267, 283, 453

Valentinus, and Fourth Gospel, 262, 285
Vespasian, on the throne, 156
Victorinus, of Pettau, on the Revelation, 4
  on the 24 Elders, 97
  the Woman in the sun, 126
  the seven Emperors, 155
  the New Jerusalem, 174
  John, 262, 285
Virgo, the constellation, 127
Vishnu, his incarnation, 21, 166
  heavenly waters flow from, 182
Vritra, slain by Indra, 168

Watchers, the, in Dan. and Enoch, 66
Waters of Life, 111, 182
Wellhausen, on the Woman's flight, 123
Wisdom of Solomon, the, 12
Wisdom, the impersonation of, 12
  in the O.T., 293 ff.
  in Ecclus, 293
  in Wisd. of Sol., 295
  in Philo, 301 f.
  her gifts, 425 f.
Witness, to Jesus, 259 f.
Witness of the Spirit, 463
Witnesses, the two, 115
Woman, the, vested in the sun, 118 ff.
Woman, the, on the Beast, 153 f.
Woes, three, 112
Word of God, in Rev. xix. 13, 165
Word of the Lord, the, 291 f.
Works of Jesus, as witness, 260
  and of the disciples, 383 ff
World, the, as son of God in Philo, 301
  in the Hermetica, 325
  lies in the Evil One, 389
  different aspects of, 404
Worship, the heavenly, 92 ff., 103, 116, 149, 160
Wrath, (in Rev.) the divine, 58 f., 104, 109, 116, 149, 165
  of God (in John), 348, 392, 402, 443

Yama, lord of hell, 10
Yekara, the Glory, 292
Yima, shepherd-king, 111

Zarathustra, 9, 169
Zebedee, the sons of, 240, 246
Zephaniah, on a day of Yahweh, 7
Zeus, his eternity, 64, 315
  marriage with Hera, 161
Zion, the ideal, 180

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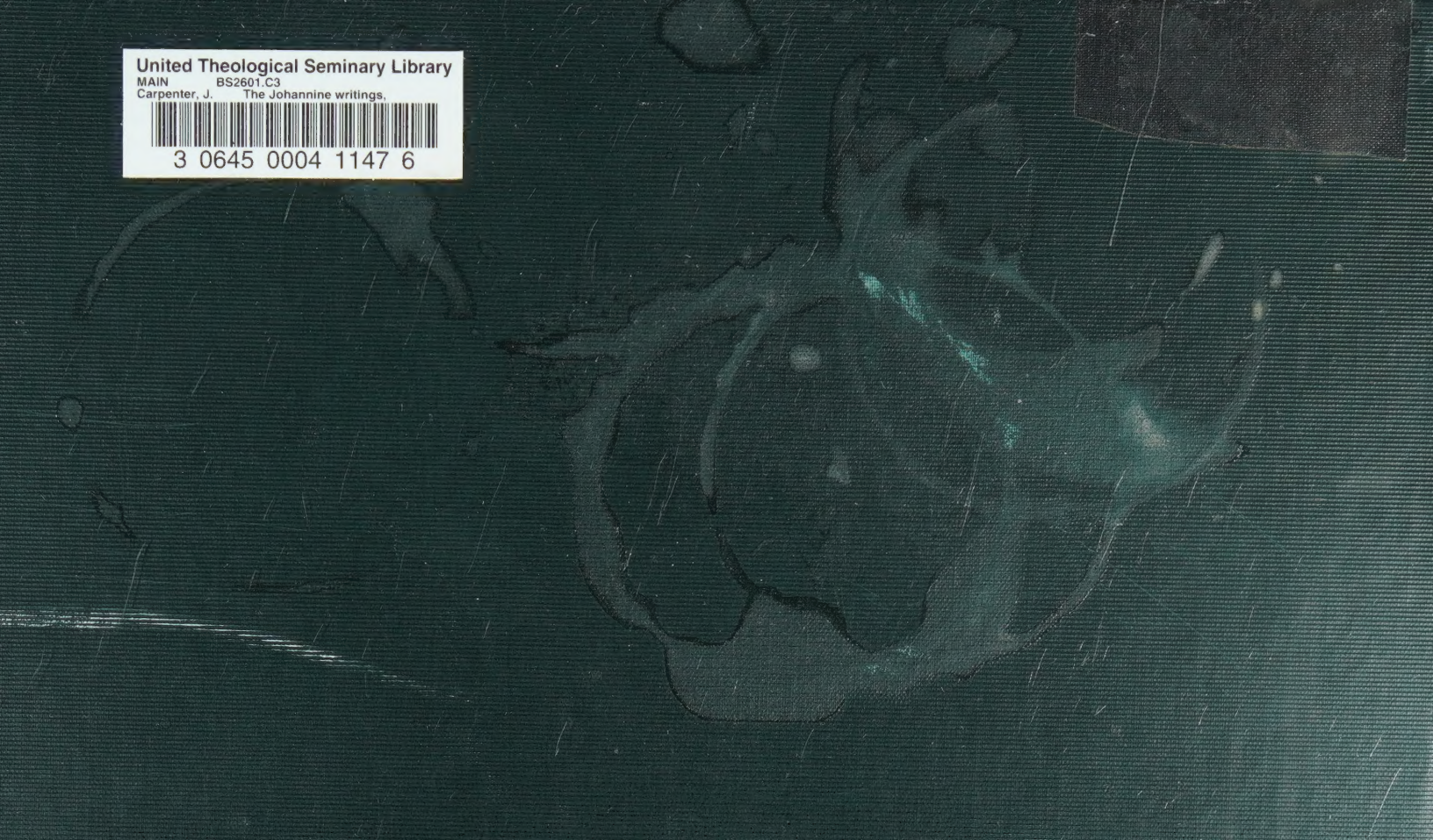

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